

# SAINT GEORGE

SAINT GEORGE WAS FOUNDED IN 1892 AS THE JOURNAL OF THE RUSKIN SOCIETY OF BIRMINGHAM; IN 1901 THE JOURNAL OF THE RUSKIN UNION, LONDON, WAS INCORPORATED WITH IT, AND IT NOW APPEARS AS THE AMALGAMATED JOURNAL OF THESE SOCIETIES, AND AS A NATIONAL REVIEW DEALING WITH LITERATURE, ART AND SOCIAL QUESTIONS IN A BROAD AND PROGRESSIVE SPIRIT.

NO. 17, VOL. V.

JANUARY, 1902.

THE CONTENTS OF THIS NUMBER INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

DANTE AND BOTTICELLI. By John Oliver Hobbes.  
RUSKIN'S MESSAGE OF EXCELSIOR.

By Sir H. H. Howarth, F.R.S.

THE PRE-RAPHAELITE PAINTERS. By D. S. Riddoch.  
NOTES ON *SESAME AND LILIES*. By the Rev. J. B. Booth.  
HOTOGRAVURE PLATE: STUDY BY MR. RUSKIN OF  
CARPACCIO'S ST. GEORGE.  
REVIEWS AND NOTES.

(The full list of contents is given inside.)

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January, 1902.

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# The Ruskin Society of Birmingham

(The Society of the Rose).

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## SYLLABUS OF LECTURES FOR THE HALF SESSION ENDING APRIL, 1902.

1902.

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MRS. HUMPHRY WARD.

Feb. 5.—“COWPER.”

Feb. 19.—“ARTHUR SIDGWICK, M.A. (Reader in Greek to the University of Oxford.)  
ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON FROM A PAINTER'S POINT OF VIEW.”

Mar. 5.—“WHAT IS THE USE OF A POET?”  
T. C. GOTCH.

Mar. 19.—“THE VERY REV. CHAS. W. STUBBS, D.D. (Dean of Ely.)

SOME UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF RUSKIN.”  
DR. OLIVER LODGE, Principal of the University of Birmingham.

Apr. 9.—“THE KING'S ENGLISH: ALFRED TO EDWARD VII.”  
PROFESSOR W. W. SKEAT.

Apr. 30.—ANNUAL MEETING, followed by Lecture: “RUSKIN'S EDUCATIONAL THEORIES, WITH SOME  
ACCOUNT OF AN ATTEMPT TO CARRY THEM OUT.”  
H. LOWERISON.

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## OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY.

- 1.—To form a centre of Union for Students and others interested in Mr. Ruskin's Writings.
- 2.—To promote the study and circulation of his works by means of Lectures' Discussions, and the issuing of such publications as may be deemed advisable.
- 3.—To influence public opinion, in relation to Arts and Ethics, on lines which he has indicated; and
- 4.—Generally to encourage such life and learning as may fitly and usefully abide in this country.

The Society has corresponding members in many of the chief Continental and American cities and universities. It invites letters of enquiry, and wherever possible will gladly give advice and help to students and others.

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## SYLLABUS OF LECTURES.

SESSION 1902-1903.

1902. Oct. 21.—Presidential Address: "Ruskin."

(Tuesday.) LORD AVEBURY.

(In the large lecture theatre of the Midland Institute.)

Nov. 5.—"The Artist's Life."

MRS. CRAIGIE. (John Oliver Hobbes.)

Nov. 19.—"The Future of English Verse."

HENRY NEWBOLT. (Editor of the *Monthly Review*.)

Dec. 3.—"Some Unpublished Letters by Mr. Ruskin."

SIR OLIVER LODGE.

Dec. 10.—"Verona."

REV. A. JAMSON SMITH, M.A.

1903. Jan. 21.—"The Gothic Revival and its Place among Nineteenth Century Ideals."

PROFESSOR C. H. HERFORD.

Feb. 4.—"John Ruskin."

SIR HENRY H. HOWORTH.

Feb. 18.—"Applied Science and Social Control."

M. E. SADLER, M.A. (Director of Special Enquiries and Reports to the Education Department.)

Mar. 4.—"Primitive Types of Culture."

J. LEWIS PATON, M.A. (Headmaster of University College School.)

Mar. 18.—"The Feeding of the Sheep and especially of the Lambs."

ISABELLA FYVIE MAYO.

Apr. 1.—"The Chanson de Roland."

MAURICE HEWLETT. (Author of "The Forest Lovers.")

Ap. 29.—Annual Meeting.

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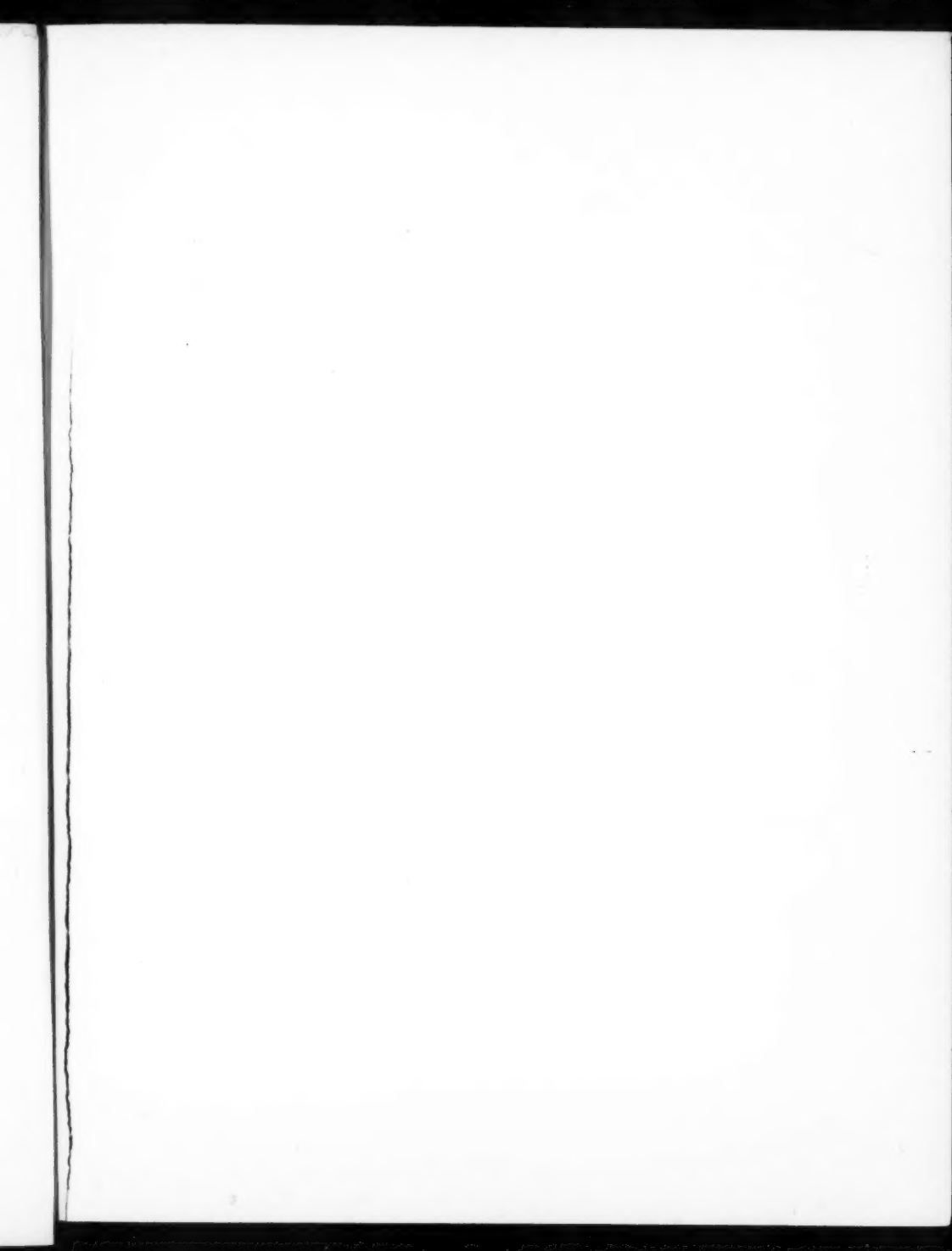
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St. George. A study from Capaccio's 'St. George slaying the Dragon'.


*By John Ruskin.*

# SAINT GEORGE.

No. 17. Vol. V.

January, 1902.

## CARPACCIO'S "ST. GEORGE SLAYING THE DRAGON."

E are very glad to be able to reproduce in this number Mr. Ruskin's drawing of the figure of St. George from Carpaccio's picture of "St. George Slaying the Dragon" in the Chapel of St. George of the Sclavonians at Venice.

In the third volume of *Fors* (Letter XXVI) Mr. Ruskin gives some account of the history of St. George, who was born in Cappadocia in the third century and was put to death on the 23rd April, A.D., 290. Emerson's account of St. George is wholly erroneous and refers to another personage. With regard to "the venerable belief which Carpaccio set himself to picture in the Chapel of St. George," Mr. Ruskin in *St. Mark's Rest*, says: "How far he knew its wide reign and ancient descent, or how far, without recognising these, he intuitively acted as the knowledge would have led him, must be to us doubtful . . . . But painting this glory, he paints with it the peace that over the King-threatened cradle of another Prince than Perseus, was proclaimed to the heavy-laden."

The following is an extract from Mr. Ruskin's description of the picture which he so warmly admired and so faithfully copied:

"Carpaccio had seen knights tilting and represents his St. George, armed from shoulder to heel, in proof, sitting firmly in the saddle; but without his helmet—for the real difficulty in

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dragon fights, is not so much to kill your dragon, as to see him; at least to see him in time, it being too probable that he will see you first. Carpaccio's St. George will have his eyes about him, and his head free to turn this way or that. All the skill gained in a chivalric youth, all the might of a soldier's manhood, he summoned for this strange tourney; stooping slightly, he meets his dragon at the gallop, and gathering his strength as he drives the spear point straight between his enemy's jaws. His face is very fair, at once delicate and powerful, well-bred in the fullest bearing of the words; a plantagenet face in general type, but much refined. The lower lip is pressed upwards, the brow knit, in anger and disgust partly, but more in care—and care not so much concerning the fight's ending, as that this thrust in it shall now be rightly dealt. His hair flows in bright golden ripples, strong as those of a great spring whose up-welling waters circle through some clear pool, but it breaks at last to float over brow and shoulders in tendrils of living light."



## DANTE AND BOTTICELLI.\*

By Mrs. Craigie  
("John Oliver Hobbes").

**H**AVE a great fear, and, you may well think, a greater audacity in venturing to address this distinguished Society, but I was once told by a scholar of the highest eminence, "You can write or talk about anything you please at any time, and if you want a title, call it—'A few remarks on Dante,' and it will be all right. He is bound to come in!" With this warning, which I offer most respectfully to your kindness, I will come at once to the beginning of my little address.

Dante and Botticelli are not names which are commonly associated. Both men were born in fortunate days and lived to see evil ones; one died actually, and the other practically in exile. Botticelli lived 126 years after the poet's death. He painted, in many opinions, the most pathetic, highly idealised Madonnas in the world; but, he also painted "The Birth of Venus," which is not a religious subject—from an Anglo-Saxon point of view. Another picture, considered his masterpiece, is the "Primavera," a love poem in paint, which, apart from its rare beauty, has a certain historical association with the marriage of "La Belle Simonetta." The history is simple enough—one of young lovers, an early marriage, and the death shortly after of the bride.

Putting aside its unparalleled value as a work of pure decoration, in colour, in composition, in actual technique, there is over and above all these,—feeling, which one can describe only as a combination of music and dancing and joy and something else which, without being melancholy or depressing, is unmistakably sorrow, but sorrow exalted to such a point that it becomes instead of a heaviness an inspiration—a promise and not a disappointment.

Before going further, I must remind you that at the time of the

\* A Lecture delivered before the Ruskin Society of Birmingham, November 6, 1901.

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Masters we call great there were no exhibitions. The artists, the architect and the craftsman worked together, and pictures were painted as part of some scheme of decoration. They were to stand in some certain place. They were to produce some studied effect of light or colour. They were to commemorate some special event or to embody some particular idea, which could be properly associated with the niche it filled and the roof above it. A distinguished artist of my acquaintance has very graphically compared our modern Academy to the Albert Hall filled with eight hundred orchestras, each playing a different composition by a different composer simultaneously. It is quite true that our enjoyment of the Old Masters is also undertaken on precisely the same lines. Churches have been despoiled, monasteries, palaces, villas have been ransacked and their treasures accumulated together in a heterogeneous mass; it is said for their safety, but it is chiefly, I think, for the convenience of the tourist.

To see such a picture, for instance, as the "Primavera" in one of the darkest rooms in Florence, surrounded by altar pieces representing certain episodes in the New Testament, is disadvantageous enough to the works but a serious injustice to the student. A work of perfect art, after all, can take care of itself, but the student, groping for knowledge and seeking to know the best things in the best possible way and desiring above all that gift of discerning at once the distinction between the supreme and the admirable and the meritorious and the bad, can only be fatigued and tormented by comparing things which were never meant to be compared, which cannot be compared any more than we should compare a forest of pines with the sea on a June night.

The power to enjoy simple pleasures—a solitary walk at sunset in some country lane smelling of clover and hedge flowers, with peeps, perhaps, of the sea in the distance, a vineyard, an apple orchard or some humble farm—was far more striking in Botticelli than in Dante. The artist who painted "La Belle Simonetta" had, originally, the seriousness which we find in children—the

## DANTE AND BOTTICELLI.

quality of accepting all that is gay, exhilarating and beautiful entirely as a matter of course. No great painter, with the possible exceptions of Rubens, Teniers, Watteau and Boucher, was ever especially cheerful as we understand the term. No poet of the first rank was ever what is commonly known as bright. Between a morbid pessimism, however, and levity there is certainly a mean, and that is the mean illustrated in the works of Botticelli and Dante. How could any person who felt, who saw, who heard, who reflected, maintain a smiling, unclouded contentment? It is not possible. Hope and Beauty are always possible, fortunately, and the two elements are everywhere present in the works of a true genius—no matter how persecuted, misunderstood or unhappy. They become tragic, as Shakespeare became tragic, as, presently, we shall see Botticelli become tragic, and as Dante, from the commencement, was invariably. But it is a sign of debility in any reader or observer if they mistake any tragic development for what we are so fond of calling at the present time too depressing for words. Those who clamour for a cheerful art do not know what the word art means. The great thing is to be just, and, so long as the work is kept just and the critic is healthy, sad endings and a right appreciation of the inexorable justice in animate and inanimate nature can cast no gloom.

The trouble nowadays is that the so-called edifying artists exaggerate the theory of punishment and the so-called immoral writers exaggerate the wickedness of the sinner, and thus, between the two exaggerations, both founded on insincerity of the worst kind, we find the well-balanced person abhorring art honestly from the depths of his upright soul. His common sense is revolted. In a good many minds there is still a kind of prejudice against Botticelli himself, who has been associated most improperly with a disagreeable type of invertebrate æstheticism. The "Botticelli lid" has passed into the comic verse of the day as the synonym for all that is affected, meretricious and silly.

Botticelli, toward the end of his life, sacrificed, according to

## SAINT GEORGE.

several critics, much valuable time in the execution of some illustrations of *The Divine Comedy* of Dante. It was not until the close of the fifteenth century that printed copies of Dante were in circulation. But printed books, curiously enough, were despised by wealthy collectors of that time, and, therefore, the writing and illuminating of manuscripts was regarded as one of the arts. This was how, in the first instance, Botticelli came to paint and illuminate an edition of Dante on parchment for Lorenzo de Piero de Medici. They consist of drawings in silver point finished with the pen in black and brown ink. I do not intend to deal critically with the illustrations. They may be studied and admired in a volume of reproductions by Mr. Lippmann, published by Lawrence and Bullen. Many of the designs are of extreme beauty, others are interesting and strange, but all of them are of invaluable importance to the student of Renaissance art. Dante, we know, had been in battle and must have seen many fearful sights, acts of cruelty and the like. The striking fact is that Botticelli, who had, apparently, little in common with Dante except his pathos, is not backward in depicting these horrors.

I should like you to follow me in my effort to show why two men so different in genius, and living at different periods in the history of Florence should have arrived at precisely the same point of view with regard to the problems raised by the Catholic Faith. The subject covers so much ground that it would be impossible to dwell at length on any part of it. My object is to do little more than suggest a few thoughts and not to expound any new theory.

Dante was the son of rich parents of good family. At the time of his birth, the enjoyment of riches was not occupying the whole attention of the Florentines. Practical affairs were the chief interest, and the young Dante received the finest education possible of his day. He studied law and the classical authors, but he loved music and drawing also, and he was taught both. He distinguished himself in military service and fought, we hear, well.

## DANTE AND BOTTICELLI.

He displayed such spirit in the expedition that it is said he was appointed Ambassador on several occasions to the various Courts and Republics of Italy. At the age of thirty-five, he was one of the chief magistrates of Florence. His occupation of this post, however, led to his political difficulties, into which I need not enter. Much later on he went on an Embassy to the Pope and also on an Embassy to the Venetians. It may be said that his own contemporaries must have felt that a very uncommon man was among them. His friend, Giotto, the artist, may have held the same opinion of him that he did of Giotto, which he expressed in a famous verse, to the effect that Cimabue had held the field, but Giotto was now the cry. A hint that fashionable reputations changed from year to year. No man ever seemed an immortal to the majority around him. Genius is seldom ingratiating, and it can never be familiar. I do not wish to be accused of wandering, but at this point I might quote a little utterance of a well-known and popular academician in referring to the work of an unpopular but brilliant colleague. "When I paint a picture," said the fashionable artist, "any fool can see that it is an uncommonly pretty little thing, but, when my friend So-and-So turns out a canvas, people are absolutely terrified, they don't know what it means. The difference between us is that I have a small talent which I have worked for all it is worth, whereas So-and-So is a man of genius." Now, this was not only charming on the part of the artist, but absolutely true.

If Dante's precise rank was not remotely guessed at by his contemporaries, his party paid him the highest honour in their power in choosing him as their representative in the transaction of national negotiation. They were quite willing to have him represent the City of Florence. He was great enough for that—immortal or not. They were content to stand behind his wings. This, too, when he was a young man.

In the case of Dante, therefore, we have the scholar, the judge, the soldier and the ambassador. We hear of his lecturing in Paris

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on theology: he must have distinguished himself, it is certain, in any walk of life. Dante, in fact, by the versatility of his genius, anticipated the Renaissance as we understand it. No artist or poet of the time of Lorenzo the Magnificent knew more of Pagan literature than Dante, or so much, probably, of public and social life. He was altogether in advance of his own time, and the real influence of his mind was not felt until it encountered the spirits of men so little resembling each other as Boccaccio, Michael Angelo, Savonarola and Botticelli. It was not that he had to offer either a religion of joy, as it is called, or a religion of suffering, but a religion of the heart. He had lived and loved, and hoped and despaired, and failed, apparently, in some undertaking—succeeded magnificently in others. He was human before all things, and those who may have found his scholarship repulsive, heard an irresistible appeal in his emotions. Boccaccio, for instance, who has never been called sublime, and who expressed himself in ironical, contemptuous satires of the utmost courtesy, loved and studied Dante all his life, and did more than all the pious of his city to make him known—by lectures, by actually copying in his own handwriting—a beautiful one—the manuscript of Dante. Few greater tributes have been paid the humanity of a religious poet than in this patient, laborious act of homage on the part of an author whose profligate writings have never ceased to be a jest when critics have to decide between comparative improprieties.

Botticelli, of whose life we know very little, was the son of a tanner. He was brought up and apprenticed to a goldsmith: an art which he employed later with exquisite skill in his paintings. He became a pupil of the Carmelite Friar, Filippo Lippi, and his gifts were soon recognised throughout Florence. He was the friend of all the famous men of his time, including Politian the poet, and Lorenzo the Magnificent. Let us imagine him working out his delicate scarcely human fancies, painting daisies and field flowers with all the love that he gives to his embroideries in the mantle



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of the Virgin, and with the feeling which his friend, the worldly poet Politian, had for violets. (Some of us may know the lovely elegy "In Violas.") Let us imagine Botticelli painting "Simonetta," while the fountains cooled the spring air, and the musicians played on stringed instruments, and the nightingales sang, when he could see the lemon trees and the beautiful blue mountains in the distance, the long stretch of valley beneath the terraces of a Medici villa. A very different life this from that of a supreme magistrate in a political crisis. In fact, Petrarch tells a story of Dante at Court, not inappropriate at this point. A prince asked him why it was that most people found a quite stupid person far more agreeable than a man of the highest learning and accomplishments. Dante replied that he saw nothing extraordinary in the fact, because friendship depended on the resemblance between character. This was ready, but it was not the way to become popular in gardens where the fountains played. We cannot imagine Botticelli indulging in repartee of this dangerous description. But the history of all artists is the history of surprises. If Botticelli was the friend of Politian, who lectured on Pagan literature, The Art of Love, and the Idylls of Theocritus, he was also the friend of Savonarola, who has been called the founder of Puritanism. Why then, one might ask, did Botticelli wait for the execution of tragic subjects till his last years? Why, as an ingenious lady once said to me, was he so especially upset by Savonarola? Well, a good many people were upset by Savonarola. I have no intention of discussing the great Dominican at this moment but he was, unquestionably, right in condemning much that he condemned, and many of his prophecies were rushing towards their fulfilment even while he perished on the gibbet.

Botticelli had painted that one ineffably bitter picture of his—"Calumny"—ten years or so before Savonarola was hanged and burned. Life in Florence under the Medici rule or protection cannot have been a lotus eater's dream. It was spent by the favoured in beautiful houses and gardens. But the sins committed were

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great and desperate because the penalties were so great and so appalling. For the orthodox there were the eternal punishments described by Dante; for those who were sceptical in their attitude towards worlds elsewhere, there were unquestionable earthly terrors in the way of poison, the dagger and prisons. Botticelli, in this very picture of which we are speaking, shows us a stately hall of luxurious pleasure. Through the windows we see a perfect sky and landscape but, within the palace, we are shown, plainly enough, the ferocity, cruelty, and moral weakness. Truth, altogether resembling one of his Venuses, stands apart from the tormentors, their victim, and the judge—the judge, who is neither just or unjust, but apparently bewildered—another Pilate.

What were the brutal, base, and degrading facts which broke in with such ferocity upon the dreamer's mind? What spotted snake entered into that sacred, inaccessible world of poetry and idealism? Well, the spotted snake was, probably, life itself. Every Paradise is always to the outsider a "Fool's Paradise,"—that is nothing, but when the Peri within the gates begins to feel that all is not well *outside*, we have the real disillusion. This, probably, was what happened to Botticelli. The wickedness of the city and the citizens came nearer and nearer: the brutal and cruel and indecent talk fell louder and louder upon his unwilling ears. The tale bearers, liars and slanderers and hypocrites cursed and sneered on every side. Just as Dante turned from writing the most sublime love verses ever composed and gave his attention to the mysteries of Hell, so Botticelli, after the death of Savonarola, said good-bye to his Child-Madonnas, his wistful Saints, the innocent Aphrodite, and never more betrayed such visions by pen or pencil.

Botticelli has been called modern and pessimistic—why, I cannot imagine. Joyousness, in the reckless, heedless, and unthinking sense, was never yet found in the Italian genius at any period. I believe I am right in saying that the joy of living—where it may be said to exist—and the amazing rubbish written on that theme to-day

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are modern affectations. A creature of reflective mind could neither reflect nor create on joyousness alone. A bland, smiling Madonna could be executed by an irreligious person only,—a person indeed of no reverence. When Botticelli, therefore, gave his Madonnas an air, in some cases, of extraordinary suffering, he was not pessimistic, but entirely right. He did not forget the sword in the heart. It is declared again that the Venus of Botticelli is too innocent—that she also wears a faltering, almost deprecating smile. Why not? The Mother of gods and men is not the personage who plays such a striking part on the tormented canvasses and ill-used marbles of young Europe to-day. Botticelli strikes a note altogether at variance with the robust nihilism of modern art. If he knew life well enough to paint Aphrodite with a note of warning as well as tenderness on her youthful face,—if he gave his Angels wonder, and his Saints a gaze of patient but intense longing for a better acquaintance with wisdom, he was certainly not wasting his own time, nor his incomparable gifts, in attempting, toward the close of his days, some illustrations to Dante's *Divina Commedia*.

I want to dwell upon the fact that the best possible training for artists is the reading of the highest kind of literature, and the best training for writers of every class is the study of the so-called decorative arts. Botticelli, as a boy, was taught to read Dante, and Dante, as a young man, as I have said, had lessons in drawing and music. It has been well said that the mould of his thought and the perfection of his style show the great painter's instinct for colour, effect and arrangement, and the sculptor's sense of proportion. Botticelli, in his imagination, tenderness and dramatic expression was as much a poet as a painter.

Great art springs from great convictions. Work begun with a note of interrogation in the mind and finished with the sense that little is true, less worth while or worth doing at all, is essentially weak. There can be no vigour in things so conceived or produced. The old Masters, to a great extent, copied their own

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surroundings, the people around them,—their personages were mostly portraits—not studio models.

It ought to be pointed out that no Catholic artist was ever so profane as to make either statues or pictures for the purposes of worship. It is strange to find a writer of John Ruskin's experience going wrong in this matter. He complains that no Catholic could ever be found regarding the masterpieces of Titian or Michael Angelo or other with pious feelings. I should think not. They were merely pictures and nothing else, and it was never supposed that they would be regarded in any other light. On the other hand, John Addington Symonds became impatient because he found little dolls of the Virgin and the Bambino adored, as he inferred, by the common people, and hung about with trophies—silver hearts and so on. This is to confuse affection for a personified idea with idolatry. Now, when the old Masters needed a Saint, they chose some well known sinner from the best society, feeling, perhaps, that the worldly cachet of respectability was not so important as a strong countenance and the light of individual character. Now-a-days the effort seems to be to forget the surroundings and to re-create a new world and a new generation. No one must be recognised. The utmost skill is employed in passing off nonentities for ideals of beauty and courage. The imaginative effort is thus enormous and unfair. It is absurd to dress out a picturesque ignoramus and present him, for instance, as a possible S. Augustine. The artist brings himself to his task, and, as he sees, thinks, feels and fancies, he must paint. The full mind must, of necessity, compose full pictures, and the modern distinctions drawn between works which are called purely decorative and purely illustrative seem to me particularly tedious. Perhaps most of us know the story of Albrecht Dürer going to a fair and seeing a blue monkey. He hurried home and immediately introduced the animal into a sketch he was preparing of "The Holy Family." This seems to me eminently characteristic of all creative minds. Every blue

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monkey we meet must go into the vision. Dante took all his country gave him, whether in legend, or tradition, or history, or in revelation. To him the gods had never gone. The sacred Muses were as real as the Cardinal Virtues. He speaks of Phaeton as impartially as he does of the Archangel Gabriel. Pallas and Mars as well as Saul were sculptured on one of the pavements of Purgatory. The "Paradiso" itself opens with an appeal to Apollo. My opinion is, that Dante believed fully in Apollo as one of the lesser angels, and the mythological references, which could never be otherwise than pedantic and unnatural in English writers—and which do seem pedantic, certainly, in Milton—were Dante's birthright. No one has ever yet called Dante a Pagan. We hear nothing about his being a degenerate. We do hear, however, from the lips of Beatrice that he was no saint, and from her silent laughter, to which he makes constant reference, and from the frank surprise of the souls who meet him unpunished in Purgatory, he gives us to understand that his friends, at least, considered him quite human enough to require a good deal of chastening before he was fit to enter Paradise. His frankness on this point is characteristic of Catholicism, which always starts with the assumption that everybody is infinitely capable of doing everything, and, if they are not restrained at any point, it is rather by the grace of God than any acute personal merit.

My point here then is this—there is nothing decadent or irreligious in the fact that Botticelli painted Venus and the Graces as well as the Madonna and the Angels. There was never the least confusion in his mind, or the mind of his nation between the two. Such morbid and corrupt imaginations are wholly modern, wholly un-Catholic, wholly and essentially un-Italian. There is a life of the flesh and a life of the spirit, and while we are alive we have to represent, as best we may, both lives.

We hear that the reading of Pagan literature made the world more beautiful, more charming, and made the conscience lighter

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and gayer, greatly at the cost of Paradise. Now, what do people mean when they speak of the Pagan spirit? I will confess that ever since I heard, as a child, of the wicked pagans, who simply would be happy, I have been trying to find their groves of pleasure as opposed to our vale of tears, and to learn the secret of their deluded joy as some reply to our prophet's scroll of lamentation and woe. It is not in Homer, it is not in Virgil, it is not in the Greek Dramatists, it is certainly not in Lucretius. No one could complain of Aristotle's flippancy. Plato could not be described as happy go lucky. Ah! but the love poets Catullus and that crew. I can but say the love poets of every period seem to me a complaining set. I do not read the love poets when I want a frivolous hour, or wish to forget the anxieties of living. To be quite serious, you will all agree with me, I feel sure, when I state that a knowledge of Pagan literature can in no way weaken one's moral strength; on the contrary, it is affirmed by many persons, including Bishops, who are almost invariably good scholars, that no education can be called satisfactory without it.

Pagan literature, therefore, and the study of Ovid does not and cannot alter the facts of human existence. There were gardens and palaces before the time of Medici; there were cunning players of sweet music, and workers of gold and silver and marble and embroideries, there were singers and dancers and learned men. Children, who have never heard of Lorenzo the Magnificent, Platonic Academies, and the Renaissance, can tell you about Solomon and all his glory, and what he came to think of things in general. He, too, dipped into Pagan literature, and met in the flesh some very striking Pagan individuals, we hear that he married a few such, not without tribulation.

Now, with every appreciation for the art of Walter Pater, and the enthusiasm of John Addington Symonds, I feel bound to say that both writers have entirely failed to comprehend the Roman Catholic spirit in the Renaissance. This understanding has nothing to do with learning, with documents, with great intellec-



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tual gifts. It is a question of feeling. Ruskin himself, to whom the painters and builders of Italy owe an eternal debt of gratitude, was always too evangelical in spirit to understand all he saw. A profoundly religious writer, however, he was never perversely wrong in his reading of the Renaissance movement and its effects on the Italian mind. He felt that the immorality of Florence and Rome was something wholly independent of literature and learning and what is called priestcraft. It was the inevitable phenomenon which follows great wealth and prosperity,—the follies worked by those who dread pain and are sick of pleasures. Robert Browning in *The Ring and the Book*, has drawn the one absolutely fair picture of what we may call Roman Catholic feeling at that time. We have had no such picture, in spite of much learning and sympathy and many gifts, since Shakespeare, who caught so sanely, justly, vigorously the humanity—above all the humanity of those days. The man who could draw the character of Pompilia had missed no lesson which the Renaissance could teach.

Scholars have come from the North and from the East, but in Italy there was, with the scholarship or without it, an instinctive comprehension of the literature we call classic and sympathy with all it said. It was Italy's own spirit, her own language, her own nature, expressed, it is true, in verse of unequalled perfection and prose which must serve for ever as the model of all written speech, but, while to the learned it was art of the highest kind, to the least cultured it was always national, vital, unchanging.

Dante chooses Virgil for his master and guide, and there are as many references to Ovid as there are to S. Thomas Aquinas and the Fathers. Savonarola called Ovid a fool plainly enough in one of his sermons, and warned his hearers that the study of such writings could lead to no happy result. Ovid, however, lived to call himself a fool. But there is not a touch of Ovid's cynicism in Dante or Botticelli. We can be tolerably certain that Ovid was read by artists most eagerly for his stories from the old mythology,

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and, just as the Wagnerian operas with their legends of the Northern gods and goddesses have exercised an extraordinary fascination over Northern Europe, speaking to it of primeval fancies and instincts, so the stories of Greek and Roman mythology must have been, as they still are, particularly attractive to spirits in the South. As a matter of fact, Italy is not Italy without its so called Paganism. The Anglo-Saxons who visit its churches are so astonished at the active as well contemplative and praying life which they see within, mistake the great simplicity, the absolute familiarity with the Higher Powers, for irreverence. They cannot see that the churches are the Courts and palaces of the poor, they leave their squalid lodgments and go into these splendid mansions, which are the mere earthly symbols of the "houses not made with hands," which they are to look for in Heaven.

And now, in conclusion, I will just bring you back to my starting point, which is this—that it was neither the revival of learning, nor an interest in Greek, nor the study of Ovid, or any of these purely accidental things which drove one great man to write the *Divine Comedy* and the other to illustrate it. It was the discipline of life. It was not a disappointment in love, or an uncongenial marriage, or the woes of exile, which made Dante the eternal ambassador of the Italian spirit. It was not, of necessity, the downfall of the Medici, or the burning of Savonarola which drove Botticelli to thoughts of Heaven and Hell. Ovid, himself, was banished and got himself as cordially disliked as Savonarola. These histories do not depend on the hearing of this or that message, or the reading of this or that book. It is all a matter of human nature, and you may speak of movements, Roman Catholic, Protestant, Renaissance and the like; they are convenient terms for the student. They mark time, as people say. They are like the hour glass, but time goes whether the sand be there or not. Many of the horrors depicted in Botticelli's designs, of which we have been speaking, are now to be seen in Italy. Such things, in

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many opinions, are better not illustrated. But, in the "Paradiso," the artist had full opportunity for his sweeter gifts, and one must explore the country round Florence in the spring time to appreciate fully the lovely drawings in the "Paradise." One must see the blossoming trees, the new leaves, the wild flowers. One must look up at the dome of the sky, a real dome there, not the clouded canopy of northern climes. Here, at least, we can meet both Dante and Botticelli, and here forget all that is distressing and perplexing. Dante, after all, in taking leave of us, spoke of the stars. So, too, did Botticelli. These were the last words and the last vision. They both came by such different roads and experiences, by disillusion, distractions, bewildering grief, reactions and doubts to the same Paradise. Let this be our encouragement.

## THE PRE-RAPHAELITE PAINTERS AND THEIR PICTURES AT GLASGOW INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION.\*

By D. S. Riddoch, Vice-President of the Ruskin Society of Glasgow.

**W**HEN we were privileged to make our Summer Excursion this year among the pictures at our Exhibition I was, I fear, rash enough to undertake the duties of guide for the afternoon. As the oral method in a crowded gallery has many drawbacks at the best, what I am now to read will, I hope, supplement what was lacking then.

Now that the Pre-Raphaelite movement can be looked at dispassionately it is seen to be something more than a mediæval revival or process of photographic minuteness in painting. It may be both of these at time, but it is not an art formula merely. It is a movement implying new methods, new aims, and a new inspiration: the Modern Romantic Movement expressing itself in Art.

No more convincing proof of its power as a reforming agency could have been provided than the collection of pictures we were privileged to see in Glasgow this summer. Brought together to illustrate the progress of British Art in the nineteenth century, the Pre-Raphaelite painters easily claimed their share of attention, but where were the representatives of the Academical ideal of the Forties, on whom the P.R. Brotherhood declared war? They had disappeared from the field. One looked in vain on our Exhibition walls for works by the once great but now "sad" names of West or Fuseli, of Haydon or Barry. The bitterness of the past controversy was in part explainable in that it was matter of life or death for the old order.

\* Notes of a Lecture delivered to The Ruskin Society of Glasgow (The Society of the Rose) in Session 1901-02.

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To understand the new order it is not sufficient to dwell on the barrenness of British Art ideals as it was to be seen at the Great Exhibition of 1851. This but represented the darkness that was to precede the dawn. If the national Art ideal was mean—and it was all this—the mind of the nation was awake and surging with the new life that had come with Burns and Byron, with Coleridge and Wordsworth, with Keats and Shelley and Scott. In this awakening had come, or was coming, the emancipation of the individual in his person and in his business. Religion was next to share in the new life, and after religion Art. It is sufficient to fasten the mind on one year of that historic time (1843), surely the *Annus Mirabilis* of the Modern National Calendar. It is the year of the Disruption in Scotland, the year that Newman bade farewell to Oxford, the year that Ruskin published the first volume of *Modern Painters*. These events were not isolated, though they may seem so, and especially to the actors at the time. Nothing that is vital can be isolated or stand alone. Newman and Ruskin meet in Sir Walter Scott. The Scottish Disruption is part of the Catholic Revival. Cast the mind forward less than a generation—to the later sixties. The Catholic Revival has changed, or is changing, the Protestant conception of public worship and a new sense of order and decency informing the public mind. The Pre-Raphaelite painters reinforced by E. Burne-Jones and William Morris are designing and weaving and carving as well as painting things beautiful for the new order that has begun.

It is in relation to this artistic evolution that the Pre-Raphaelite movement must be considered if it is to be understood. Mr. Holman Hunt gave in 1886 the authoritative list of the original seven members. Stress need not however now be laid on all the names, and others fail to be included: For practical purposes the determinating names are: D. G. Rossetti, Millais, Holman Hunt, and Madox Brown, as painters; William M. Rossetti, the movement's historian; Ruskin, its champion; William Bell Scott, the warm friend of some of the members, and candid friend—as

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became his nationality—of all; and William Morris and E. Burne-Jones, who extended the new spirit to art and handicraft.

In the initial bond, as defined in "The Germ," the contracting clauses are few and elastic. On the positive side there was the desire to attain sincerity, through accuracy and truth in the recording of facts and, in addition, to put soul as well as body into their work. "A man's work" (as Mr. Holman Hunt tells us) "to be the reflex of the living image in his own mind of the ideas treated, and not the icy double of the facts themselves." On the negative side it was the determination to have done, once and for all, with the dead traditions of the Academic ideal of their time, with "Frank Stone beauties," and all their ways. The story of Frank Stone's ideal is too good to miss. William Bell Scott, visiting Kenny Meadows in 1846, tells us that he found him looking meditatively at two drawings representing Mrs. Page and Anne. "What do you think of those now as a pair—mother and daughter?" Of course I gave them praise. "Well," he went on, "I have showed them to Heath and he insists on Mrs. Page being as young as her child!" I objected for many reasons. "Oh," Heath replied, "I don't care about the maternity, or Shakespeare, or anything else. You must make her not more than twenty, or nobody will buy! If you won't, I must get Frank Stone to do her instead; all Frank Stone's beauties are exactly nineteen, and that's the age for me!"

More important, however, than the P.R. Bond was the Band. They were all of them young (lads most of them—Millais 18, D. G. Rossetti 19, Holman Hunt 20)—some of them untaught, most of them poor, but in heart and eye of each, in varying degree, was the fire and light of genius. Owing nothing to Ruskin at the start of their enterprise, they later found in him a powerful champion and supporter with purse as well as pen. Poets most of them, they were the friends of poets, attracting to themselves all that was brightest in the most brilliant decade of the nineteenth century. It was to Woolner and Rossetti that

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Mrs. Browning sent with her own hands the early copies of *Aurora Leigh* and it was to the P.R. circle that Tennyson came with the Hallam Elegies in MS., to be given to the world later as *In Memoriam*.

While all fine Art has to be tested finally from an impersonal standpoint, there is an intellectual and poetic atmosphere about these men that we must regard if we are to understand and enjoy their work.

### MILLAIS

in his early work was represented in Glasgow more completely than ever before seen out of London. Of sixteen pictures (fifteen in oil and one in water-colour) some were obviously of little interest, but we had examples historical in interest and also some of his finest work. His diploma picture, now the property of the Corporation of Liverpool, "Lorenzo in the House of Isabella," was interesting as an example of the new method, the portraits being all from real persons instead of lay figures and academic dummies. Mr. William Rossetti was good enough to send me the following list of the persons represented in the picture. He said:—"I take the heads in their order, beginning at the spectator's left. The younger brother seems to have something of F. G. Stephens; I am not entirely sure. Head behind him, a young medical man, Stocker. Elder brother, kicking out, John Harris, a painter. Young man drinking from a long glass, D. G. Rossetti. Next man, with rather frizzly hair, has been said to be Millais's father. I doubt it; the head is not like what I remember of him. I believe it is Mr. Farrer, a well-known picture dealer, who, if I recollect right, purchased the picture. Lorenzo, myself. Isabella, Mrs. Hodgkinson, wife of Millais's half-brother. The attendant was, I am pretty sure, an Academy student whom I used to know by sight, but have forgotten his name. I cannot speak as to the other figures."

To "The Carpenter's Shop" interest of a different kind is



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attached. I do not discuss, as one fairly might, its claim to be regarded as a contribution to religious art. My own view is that of all the band Millais, while having the most facile gift—being able to do anything with a pencil or a brush—was also the most mimetic, and was drawn into making this one essay by the stronger minds of Hunt and Rossetti; but "The Carpenter's Shop" is significant as one of three pictures of sacred art that are landmarks in the history of the Pre-Raphaelite movement. It was painted in 1850, about the same time as Rossetti's "Annunciation," now in the National Gallery, and Holman Hunt's "Light of the World," now at Oxford. All three pictures were intended to mark a new departure in methods of Sacred Art. The desire to attain truth and the expectation that simplicity and sincerity were the avenues that led to her throne.

The masters of the Renaissance, in their wanton might, had given to the world Moses in the guise of a "glorified prize-fighter," and the fishermen of Galilee as "Italian noblemen," too magnificent to do any fishing, and sincere souls who looked in their piety for religion founded on truth had turned aside in despair. The methods of the Pre-Raphaelite reformers were the simplest possible. In Rossetti's "Annunciation" greater, because more sincere than Millais "Carpenter's Shop," less great than Holman Hunt's "Light of the World," the Virgin is the painter's sister Christina, the Angel his brother William, the place of the visitation a room in their humble home, the manner of it a simple awakening in the morning.

Of Millais' finest early work we had "The Random Shot," a master-piece as a study, "Tender and True," and "Autumn Leaves," one of the most perfect in colour of all his picture, and of his finest later work, "Chill October." Millais was a great master of dramatic incident, as seen in the "Escape of a Heretic," but the work seen in Glasgow did not show him at his best in this department. Opinions will differ as to the direction in which his greatest skill lay. My own quite definite opinion is that his



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final claim to fame will rest on his nature worship. Much has been made of his departure from the early manner of the brotherhood. In the case of his landscapes will anyone affirm that the breadth of "Chill October," was not natural growth, and gain, and that but for the discipline of the nature worship of "Autumn Leaves," and the still finer "Ophelia" (not in Glasgow this year, but in R.S.A. Exhibition a few years ago), we should not have had the stronger if not finer work. Nothing is more characteristic of the Pre-Raphaelite painters than their love of nature and their influence was to be seen, not only in the landscape work of our own country, but in that of the romantic French and Dutch painters—Corot and the brothers Maris and others represented in our Foreign School collection. There is no schism between the Pre-Raphaelite and the poetic impressionist in their method of representing nature. Both desire to be real, to be true. It is the Unreal that is the enemy of both. It was not acquiring a broader method that marked decline in the genius of Millais. It was doing advertising work without soul or conscience, in the eager desire to get wealth, such as "Puss in the Boots," hung in the Glasgow Exhibition, as a warning to gifted and ambitious men that "*facilis descensus Averno.*"

### MADOX BROWN

was, till this year, comparatively unknown in Scotland. His famous picture "Work" excited a great deal of interest and discussion. Brown was a kind of painting Carlyle, and the more we know of his character and of his struggles, the more our hearts warm to the man. An associate rather than a member of the Band at its initiation; of all of them, he had received in Holland, and Belgium, in Rome, and in Paris, the most thorough training. When in 1844, he settled in London, at the age of twenty-three, he was a thoroughly trained craftsman, skilled in all branches of his art, from lithography to fresco painting. Despite his skill and genius he was doomed for long years to eat the bread of poverty,

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only winning fame in the evening of an arduous life. The explanation lay in his desire to be a painter of historic scenes, a department of art that appeals only to the few. He was not content to paint portraits of people who were known, but aspired to create representative men in a historical setting. "Wiclif reading his translation of the Scriptures to John of Gaunt." "Chaucer reading his Poetry at the Court of Edward III." "Cromwell at his Farm," with thoughts in his brain that were yet to change the face of the land. Ruskin maintains, and I think the point is unchallengeable that all great art has been of contemporaries—of things the painter has long seen and loved—yet the desire to conjure up the past is a very natural and very praiseworthy ambition for a painter. Brown's success in this difficult department of art is the series of frescoes in the Manchester Town Hall—depicting the History, the Arts, and the Industries of that City. On these and on "The Last of England," in the opinion of Mr. F. G. Stephens, his masterpiece—few pictures representing so well the passionate hopes and lofty devotion of the Pre-Raphaelite Band (now the property of the Corporation of Birmingham)—on these and on "Work" as we saw it Ford Madox Brown's fame depends.

Mr. William Rossetti was good enough to send me the following note:—"Madox Brown's picture of 'Work' is intended, in broad terms, to represent work, physical and intellectual—the latter in the figures of Carlyle and Maurice—with side glances at persons who are out of work, those who though in want have not been trained to working, the classes who being rich do not work, etc. . . . Brown's catalogue-raisonné of his exhibition in 1865 contains a very full and telling description of the picture. This description is quoted, I think in extenso, in the book written by F. M. Hueffer and published by Longmans towards 1896, 'Ford Madox Brown.' I presume you could find this book somewhere in Glasgow."

I am sorry to find that Hueffer's book is not in the "Mitchell,"

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or, as far as I know, in any of our Glasgow lending libraries ; but I add an additional interesting note on "Work" from the pen of Mr. Frederick George Stephens, who writes the authoritative article on Madox Brown in the supplement just issued of the "Dictionary of National Biography" :—

"'Work' was begun in 1852 and finished in 1868. It was painted inch by inch in broad daylight in the street at Hampstead, and is a composition of portraits the most diverse. It illustrates not merely Brown's artistic knowledge, skill and genius, but the stringency of his political views at the time, and is a sort of pictorial essay produced under the mordant influence of Thomas Carlyle and the gentler altruism of F. D. Maurice, whose portraits appear in the picture."

### HOLMAN HUNT

is the member of the brotherhood who has changed least from his initial manner, but he does not claim that there is any merit in this fact. It has suited his individuality that is all. If Madox Brown is great and complex as an artist, Holman Hunt is great and simple, a seer of visions and a dreamer of dreams, yet strong on the side of common sense, and with a quiet persistency that overcomes all obstacles. Ideal in temper, yet practical in aim. A good citizen, he shouldered a rifle in the Volunteer Movement in 1859, and in later years the Bedouin robber of the Syrian wilds soon learned that the visionary Englishman could defend his person and his property.

Of the pictures in Glasgow "The Strayed Sheep," "Claudio and Isabella," and "The Awakening Conscience" were all from Hunt's time of struggle, which for some five years at the first was so bitter that but for the true camaraderie of Millais, who placed his savings—some £500—at his disposal, the now great painter might in defeat have had to take to farming with a view to emigration. Fame (and later fortune) came to him with the painting of "The Light of the World" in 1853. With a

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passionate desire to give the force of Syrian faces and surroundings to his records of the life of Christ, Hunt exiled himself to the East for long years of labour. In the opinion of Ruskin and D. G. Rossetti this has not been a gain to his Art—the vital element in historical painting not depending on costume and geography, but we are bound if we desire to understand his work to respect the self-denial of the man. Mons. Chesneau, a sympathetic critic, thinks Holman Hunt has painted in defiance of most of the established laws of painting. This may be so. In any case his Art must be considered as a thing *per se*. Much of his skill is to be seen in his skilful use of light. In the "Claudio and Isabella" prison scene—painted from the Lollard prison at Lambeth Palace, the face of the noble sister is made nobler by the transfiguring power of light that falls on it from the orchard-shaded window, and the face of the ignoble brother made still weaker by the eclipsing power of shadow. Then of the "Strayed Sheep," there was nothing else quite like it in our whole exhibition. It arrested the thoughtful passer-by at every visit. The nature-worship in it, the flowers of the tangled brake, even the sheep might seem too perfectly realised for the every-day life of the world, but the sunlight, the first warm streaks of the golden dawn seemed as the Divine Benediction transfiguring the world.

## RUSKIN'S MESSAGE OF EXCELSIOR.\*

By Sir Henry H. Howorth, K.C.I.E., D.C.L., F.R.S.

"No other man in England," said Carlyle to Emerson, "has the same divine rage against falsity."

**S**TANDING before such an audience I realize most completely the presumption and assurance involved in my having accepted your invitation to address you on such a topic as Ruskin. As Prophet, Poet Moralist—where can he be matched among the writers of the last quarter of a century? For the strength and delicacy and lucidity of his musical English, for the high level at which he sustained the social gospel he had to deliver, not merely in his writings, but in his life, for the purity, the earnestness, and the gravity of the moral sermon which he continually preached, he seems to me to have no peer among modern Englishmen. What claim have I to discuss such a master and teacher, either by way of praise or blame, before those who know him much better than I do, and after the whole gamut of rhetoric has been employed on endless occasions in dissecting and analysing his message? To say anything new of his personality is virtually impossible. To give you an enchiridion of passages from his writings is to repeat what has been often done before by better men than I am. To string together a large garland of favourable adjectives is to provide a nauseous feast of common-place. I confess to you that I feel quite miserable and deplore the position in which my thoughtlessness has placed me, and in which I shall place you. I would say in palliation of your sentence, and not as a qualification of your judgment, that the reason why I would put my small stool near my master's chair, is that in one phase of his career I have done a little to imitate at least his attitude, I

\* An Address delivered to the Ruskin Union, October 31st, 1901.

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refer to his continual war against orthodoxy and the orthodox, orthodoxy of every kind and on every subject. To revolt against the conventions of opinion and practice; to prefer the most stony path rather than walk along a smooth road with the procession of people with the same ideas, the same tastes and same ends, which is called the World; to put a never-ending query to everything and everybody; to be as suspicious of the very positive sceptic as of the very positive dogmatist; to find it more exhilarating to be in a minority that can stand straight up and speak for itself, than in a majority that bows its head before some idol or merely repeats lessons it has learnt,—this attitude of courageous and indomitable rebellion against convention, which makes Milton's Satan such an attractive figure, is surely the mark by which we separate and distinguish divine men from those of common clay. It is such as they before whose blasts the walls of many a Jericho have crumbled.

These dominating, domineering, strong-willed masters and manipulators of the herd of human kind are the patterns some of us would like to follow if we dared. As Mr. Gladstone said to me once, there is nothing more exhilarating to a man healthy in mind and body than to know that the many-headed beast feels the weight and pressure of your hand and is moving whither you would have him go. When we think of such drivers of men, it is well to remember sometimes that they have not all been men of blood and iron—Alexanders, and Napoleons, and Bismarcks. We ought sometimes to converge our view upon another class, the shy and timid and self-contained seers and prophets who have seen great visions and have dragged our hearts as well as our heads in pursuit of higher things. Socrates, Isaiah, St. Francis, St. Bernard, Ruskin, and their kin. These have all had bitter critics, nor is it always gold that comes from their crucibles.

Petulant, exaggerative, self-assertive, priggish, harsh, paradoxical, dictatorial, incalculable,—these words have all been applied to one of them who is our hero to-night. Mistakes, distorted truths,

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wild sayings, and untamed thoughts,—these abound in his speech and writing; and it is as easy to pour scorn on these flecks and motes as on the freckled sun: but it is not by the well-worn standards of the critics that we can test men whose names are written on the everlasting rock. It is rather by the new direction they have compelled our thoughts and lives to take, and notably by the attitude they have adopted towards the greater riddles of life which we find it so difficult to answer. Take Ruskin for instance.

That when the world in all its ranks was given up to the worship of prosperity, and wealth and luxury, of success and sensuality, idleness and sham, a young delicate creature, half woman and half man, with deep blue eyes and delicately modelled face in its frame of rich brown hair, frail in person, weak in health, and wanting in animal strength, should have dared as a mere boy, and continued till he was an old man, to rebel openly against the strong men who held guard at the springs of learning. That he should have dared to hold aloft the banner on which is writ the word *Excelsior*, and have done so in the face of continuous and almost malignant opposition from the whole army of convention in the plains of Armageddon, and poured perpetual sweet-sounding scorn and harmoniously-phrased contempt upon all the Gods of the Market Place, should have shewn no tolerance whatever towards them, made no compromises, and bowed no knee to the Baals of the hour—is in itself a splendid career, full of dramatic and attractive glamour. It does not qualify the splendour of it that having a creed and aim, and determination, he was endowed also with that finest kind of poetic frenzy which is independent of modes and methods of expression.

Such a personality is assuredly worth studying, apart from the details of his actual handiwork. So that we may try and find his position among those stars that will shine on continually: more the pity that it should have fallen into hands like mine to do it.

To the great mass of people Ruskin is better known for his



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style than his matter. Let us say a few words then first about his style. There is a delicate and naive simplicity in his own description of his mode of writing when a young man which I am tempted to quote: Having read and thought a good deal about his subject, he proceeded with his composition at home, he tells us, "as quietly and methodically as a piece of tapestry. I knew exactly what I had got to say, put the words firmly in their places like so many stitches, hemmed the edges of chapters round with what seemed to me the graceful flourishes, touched them finally with my cunningest points of colour, and read the work to papa and mamma at breakfast next morning as a girl shows her sampler."

Let us try and analyse Ruskin's method a little more closely. It is doubtful if any prose writer who wrote so much ever had a style so poetic in its formal parts. He had been a small poet once, and, as you all know, he won the Newdigate prize at Oxford for poetry; but his rôle among the recognised poets was not distinguished. It was when he turned his wonderful mastery of phrase into his prose writings and his delicate ear for the musical cadences of language that we first realised completely what English is capable of becoming. Our really lovely English speech poured from his pen in a stream which, except in the mere accident of not being divided into measured and rhythmical lines, has all the qualities of Tennyson's sensuous and majestic verse. English is incomparable in its wealth of synonyms and profuse vocabulary, and probably also in the cadences and rhythm into which it may be made to flow. These Ruskin played upon like Handel on his organ, and produced inimitable music. We seem at times as if we are actually in the presence of the embroidery with which light diversifies field and sky. Fire and gold and purple struggle for a place in his images and phrases; and yet all are kept under with so chaste a control that we are seldom conscious of commonplaces, or vulgarity, or of tricks of style. At other times when he is more restrained we seem to rush along as in a sparkling cool stream of delectably simple words, and presently, when the landscape is all



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coloured and the prophet steps upon his stage to preach the lessons he would teach us, all the passion and earnestness of his soul burst out in his language, like that of Job or Isaiah, and we not only feel the sonorous music of the words but are also arrested by the delicacy of the pathos, the fancy, the humour and irony which he deals out so lavishly; and the effect is to grave it on the memory with the precision of outline, grace and perfection of a Greek cameo.

I was once complimenting a simple country parson on the graphic beauty of some of the passages in his address. He replied that he liked to put an occasional stained glass window into his sermons. This seemed to me to describe by an image the effect produced by a page of Ruskin's stately and melodious prose. It is like one of those perfectly designed Gothic interiors where the graceful tracery of the stone and the perfection of the foliage is lit up by gloriously tinted old glass at intervals, until we feel that all we want besides is the organ to play and tell us in scarcely material language something of the mystery of nature and its secrets, and something also of the deeper mystery of life which was the continual burden of our great prophet's preaching. I remember some years ago I was dining with a famous and dear friend of mine, Sir William Gowers, when we had a happy dinner of six, all of whom had ideas and the courage to express them. The question arose as to who was then the greatest living *littérateur*. We eventually voted; when I believe that four votes were given for Ruskin and two for Rénan, the latter of whom in regard to style was the counterpart of Ruskin, but had to deal with an instrument of thought whose precision and wealth of idiom made it comparatively easy to write well in. This was perhaps a measure of Ruskin as a craftsman in literature, as a word-painter, as a manipulator of form in language, which I think would be endorsed by most people.

It is not merely or principally, however, for his command of a glorious and masterly style that I have ventured to claim for him so

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high a place. It is for his matter that some of us are devoted to him ; and it makes no difference that in so many instances, having like ourselves, only a smoked glass through which to see the sun (no other medium being, in fact, endurable to human eyes), he sometimes mistook mirage for reality, and a distorted image for a complete and perfect picture. It was the attitude which he adopted which claims our loyalty chiefly ; and this in two fields where fierce polemics rage, one in regard to the true theories and purpose of human art, and the other the true theory of human conduct. In regard to the former he was a very complete iconoclast and destroyed with hammer and axes the Gods and Goddesses which were everywhere being worshipped, and he spoke with a double authority, since he was not only a critic but himself a capable artist, who had trained his eye and hand as well as a most fastidious taste. In regard to art of all kinds he pointed out more eloquently than had been done before, that it is a mere language, a mode of expression ; and that in order to test it we must see what lessons this language has to impart and not converge our attention on mere technical qualities. It does not follow therefore, according to Ruskin's view, that an excellent draughtsman or colorist, or both combined, or a skilful modeller and carver of stone, is the best judge, or in many cases is a judge at all, of the everlasting qualities underlying a painting or a piece of sculpture. In each case the artist may speak the language of his craft fluently, but he may have nothing to say that is worth saying, or he may be spreading poison and contamination by the grossness of his ideals. Ruskin in effect taught us to concede to the artist the right to judge of the mechanical qualities of painting or sculpture and fully admitted—that a painter has every right to tell us in the matter of producing certain effects, that such and such a method of employing the brush and of laying down the colour make Velasquez and Frank Hals and Rubens and Titian supreme artificers ; and the same with technical judgments in regard to sculpture and to architecture. When we are asked, however, to concede more than this he would

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demur altogether. The technical methods of the painter, the sculptor and the architect are, as I have said, after all merely the language in which he embodies his thought. What we value most in Art is not the mode of translating ideas into language, either written language or that of form, but the ideas themselves; prizing most the most truthful thoughts, the most inspiring ideas. The more devoted, according to Ruskin, a man becomes to the highest ideals he can formulate of truth, beauty and goodness, the nearer he will be to God. That represents, so far as I know, Ruskin's positive religion. Whatever you may feel about its quality and completeness, you will grant that it came from a man whose walk was straight and whose forehead always faced the blue sky. It is by this creed we must test Ruskin's more concrete judgments about art.

Ruskin, then, took his stand upon the position that the value of a work of art is what it teaches us. A written prose work, or poem, a painting, a piece of sculpture, may embody all the graces of outline and colour; but if it teaches low debasing animalism, if it leads us down the path where men's passions have their revels, he declared that it was a vile thing; and in declaring this he fixed, I think for ever, one of the most important canons of true art. Half his life he spent in trying to see and interpret the beauties and the purposes of Nature. The poets had preceded him partly in this, but only very partially. None of them ever spent so much time in actual contact with, and analysis of, the beautiful things of God, and none of them had the supreme gift to anything like the same extent of painting pictures in words, so that what he saw might be seen by others. His purpose in this, the aim underlying it all, as he tells us in his greatest work, was to declare the perfectness, and eternal beauty of the work of God, and to test all work of man by concurrence with or subjection to that.

Hence one of the great services he performed was the laying of a moral foundation for art. To him the newer creed of Materialistic philosophers was *anathema maranatha*. He could not allow

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the possibility of the great world and all it contains being an automatic machine, self-evolved, governed and controlled by nothing, helplessly floating down the tide of time at mere hazard. To him every intricate mechanism in flower and insect, in man as in the painted agate, was only explicable as the handiwork of some transcendent artificer, who never allows us to see his face, who has never told us the underlying riddles of the unseen (which would be too probably beyond the power of our faculties to grasp, even if we were face to face with them), but who is represented by shadows and types and symbols, the best and the most beautiful.

When Ruskin began to write, art was still very largely dominated by the standard of the technical artist, and his patrons, the picture-dealer, and the uncultured Mecaenas, who could often appreciate technical qualities when he was incapable of seeing anything more. Technical qualities are excellent things. The greatest artists are often those who have striven most to attain them; and Ruskin was always preaching that the real craftsman was the one who took the most pains and the most care. This is quite true; but he went on to preach continually that it was only part of the truth, and that it was not the art itself but the lessons taught by work of art which ought to give it its reputation—its truth, its purity, its freshness, its strength and its imaginative qualities; and, especially, the way in which it appeals to the human heart or emotions; rather than its merely sensual graces of colour and form. A paralyzing inanity had largely overwhelmed this higher and more ideal teaching of art, when Ruskin began to write. Grace of outline and of composition, and a continual repetition of the same thoughts and ideas enveloped a great deal of it, and the standard of taste was dominated by these features. The disease was wide-spread, it had laid its leprous hand on literature and manners as well as upon art, and its roots could be traced back to the Renaissance, as it is called. If I were asked in fact to define Ruskin's concrete attitude towards art in a

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sentence, it would be a determined revolt against the Renaissance, its standards, and ideals.

What do we mean then by the Renaissance ?

Its innermost and deepest meaning no doubt was the culmination of the gentle and gradual awakening of the human mind from a long sleep ; the emancipation of the individual man, and his mind from the tyrannous domination of organized and disciplined public opinion upon almost every subject, and the loosening and detachment by a flood of ideas of all that rust and dust and whitewash, under which Truth and Progress had been disguised and lost. It was a great rejuvenation of man due to many causes and not to one, and which had to fight its way against many obstacles besides the one which fills the imagination so largely, namely, the indomitable resistance of the Church.

This generally-conceded view of the Renaissance as a rejuvenation accounts for the enthusiasm of its champions, who look on it as the leaven that leavened so deeply and thoroughly the stolid mass of indifference and Materialism—that decay, as of a sepulchre, which the Church had striven to drape with such art as survived ; the crumbling ruins which it had sought to render picturesque by mysticism and superstition. The Renaissance was, in fact, a gigantic effort by the Titan underneath the mountain, the human mind under the load of convention, to free itself, and to breathe and to think what it pleased, and to try any experiments it pleased ; and we ought to bow our heads in gratitude before its martyrs and victims. Yet this is not the whole truth. Every rebellion on a large scale causes ruin and destruction which men subsequently deplore. This is inevitable. You cannot storm Basing House without trampling out the beds of marigold and mignonette and rosemary which are planted so beautifully about it. Every surgical operation, however necessary, brings pain and involves danger ; and there are no anodynes in the surgical operations which underly revolutionary movements. So it was with the Renaissance. It did much more than any other movement, for

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the fixing of higher standards; but it destroyed a great deal and it involved some deplorable developments. It was caused to some extent by the revival of classical ideas, and this was largely the revivifying of a corpse. The revival of Greek learning brought in a devotion for the more ideal kinds of Greek philosophy. Plato was soon preferred to Aristotle, and Platonic talk permeated all the cultured classes, from the Pope to the humbler writers of poetry and prose. With the devotion to this new learning came in also Pagan ideas and ideals upon many subjects; but what was more influential was the all-pervading Scepticism of the Greek mind, its spirit of continual inquiry and questioning and doubting, and, as in the case of the Greeks, the gradual crumbling and sapping and destruction of a great deal that had been unquestioned. This still remained unquestioned among the uneducated, the great bovine crowd with its stony stare into the sky where it sees so little. But with the educated, scepticism permeated everywhere. It reached and dominated the very arcana of the Church, and paganizing Renaissance Popes fill a large place in the history of the Papacy at this time. The Roman Catholic Church has been blamed and, as I think, very unfairly, for this paganizing process. It was a universal movement of the human mind, and a Pope or a Cardinal could no more escape it than they could escape an epidemic of small pox or typhus fever. It permeated literature, which in many cases lost its freshness and originality and became a mere echo and copy of classical models, preferring form to substance and pedantry to originality. The finding of ancient sculpture led to a revolution in that art. The models were not the Elgin marbles, which were not available, but the grosser sculpture of the Rhodian school with its exaggerations of the animal side of man. Hence the diversion of a great sculptor like Michel Angelo into what I have the presumption to describe as his deplorable weakness for the display of muscles and contortions, his subservience in part to a merely gladiatorial ideal. The finding of the frescoes in the villa Medici led to the taste for the Pompeian style of decoration, both in wall-

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decoration and on majolica, with its festoons of flowers and its grotesque animals and masques, etc., in which much invention was no doubt shown, but which was a mere echo of what had been a living art 1,500 years before. But what was more deplorable was the paganizing of Christian art. The Gods and Goddesses of Olympus with their attributes and surroundings were transformed and adapted to a kind of Christian Pantheon; and the purity and sublimity and simplicity of Christian ideals, of its deity and Christian tenets were utterly sophisticated by sensual inanities, false in every sense, which remained the standards of high art until Ruskin broke the spell. Architecture fell under the same bondage. The sweating house of a Roman Bath, the Pantheon, became the model for the domes of Christian churches; the palace of Diocletian for the new Palladian style; and if our hearts can hardly be made to beat at all as we ramble about that cold dead marble mausoleum of Christian art, I mean St. Peter's at Rome, or its echo St. Paul's in London, as they do in the aisles of Milan Cathedral or in the choir at Canterbury, it is because the pagan renaissance ideal had in the former superseded the more spontaneous and animating poetry of the Christian inspiration in the latter. Let me here quote a fine paragraph from a criticism by Mr. W. S. Lilly, with which I do not exactly agree, but which clearly expresses most of my meaning in nervous English and which is inspired by Ruskin's teaching. He says: "The architectural monuments of the middle ages which still adorn Europe were wrought by free and intelligent artists, and truly symbolize the dominant principles in the lives of their builders. Faith in the unseen, aspiration towards the infinite are written on the features which were the distinctive creation of the Gothic schools; in the varied foliage and thorny fretwork and shadowy niches and buttressed pier and fearless height of subtle pinnacle and crested tower, sent like 'an unperplexed question up to heaven.' Far other are the characteristics of Renaissance architecture. I am not indeed concerned to deny the merit of particular buildings. I am not insensible to the voluptuous pomp of the Gesu at Rome,



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to the richness of material and elegance of detail of Santa Maria Della Salute at Venice. I do not doubt the excellence after their kind of many of the works of Palladeo and Galeazzo Alessi of François Mansard and Inigo Jones. But these structures differ as widely in *motif* from such piles as the Abbey Church and Hall at Westminster, the Cathedral of Amiens and the Duomo at Pisa, as a play of Racine differs from a play of Shakespeare. The Renaissance architects like the Renaissance poets, worked in chains, the iron whereof entered into their souls. For truth, they have a parade of science; for imagination "correctness," cold and earthly; they are satisfied with the observance of their self-imposed rules; grace and fancy are ruthlessly sacrificed to Procrustean forms. The note of servitude is upon the Neo-classical architecture, even more fully than upon the architecture of the ancient world. The designer no longer creates; he copies, adapts, contrives; technical skill is the highest accomplishment of the artisan, sunk into an animated tool, "a mere machine," with its valves smoothed by heart's blood instead of oil, the most pitiable form of slave. *Exitus acta probat.* Renaissance architecture is the school which has conducted men's inventive faculties, from the Grand Canal to Gower Street; from the marble shaft and the lancet arch, the wreathed leafage and the flowing and melting harmony of gold and azure, to the square cavity in the brick wall. Such is, in substance the base captivity unto which the Renaissance reduced the architecture of Europe." *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, II, 120-121.

I have quoted this fine passage because it is not hackneyed and you have possibly not heard it before, and because it rings all through with Ruskin's teaching.

Ruskin in effect rebelled against the copies, and the shams, and lifeless dead echoes of another time which had lost their inspiration. He bade us look at the Elgin marbles as probably the finest works of imaginative art in the world, "because they are not only technically faultless but because they are true in their inspiration and teaching." The men who carved these gods and goddesses



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believed they were what they represented. Thorwaldsen and Gibson largely revised the classic taste in marble, they gave us graceful figures, beautifully and correctly modelled, but figures that speak in a dead tongue: they have nothing to tell us as the sculpture of Donatello, and Sansovino, and Pisani, of Stevens, and may I say of my very accomplished friend Gilbert, have. When Ruskin praises the naive religious art of the 15th century at Florence, he does it for the same reason. There you have not only freshness and beauty, but truth and reality. The ideals which men painted were the ideals they believed in. He turns round from them and denounces in scathing language the great canvasses on which Rubens and Jordaens put their indecencies and their sensual presentations of fauns and nymphs, fat and round and artificially painted Flemish women, and coarse and sensual men. The technical painter may rave and scream as he pleases about the *technical* qualities of the work; but we say, with Ruskin, away with this salacious panorama of painted strumpets! It is not to our taste. It teaches us nothing but what is base and revolting. It was produced in response to a rotten moral sense. It breathes no poetry, and if painters want such models let them keep them for their studios, and not defile the eyes of innocent maidens with them. When Rubens and Frank Hals, when Titian and Moroni, and Vandyke turn from these hideous and degrading and utterly false ideals of high imaginative art,—of what the painter ought to paint if he is to teach the world any lessons—to their marvellous portraits we feel at once the change: we are in reality and truthfulness again. But we need not go so far afield. Have we not our Sir Joshua Reynolds, who is a double figure—one splendid, almost unrivalled (I mean when at his best), as a portrait painter; the other as a painter of ideal or religious subjects, in which most of what he did is almost beneath contempt. In this connection I am tempted to revert for an instant to antiquity. It is the fashion to despise Roman sculpture and very largely with justice. The imaginative sculpture of the Romans was dead and lifeless and

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eclectic as most of the paintings of the Caracci, and the School of Bologna ; and for the same reason. They are copies of ideals which were no longer living. But the portraits of the Roman period are simply admirable. I very much doubt if finer sculpture can be found than the busts of the early Imperial time. Like the Dutch of later days, the Romans had no very high ideals. The barrack-yard and the tavern are not schools of poetry. Roman poetry was Greek in form and inspiration ; and their only living arts were portrait-sculpture and architecture, and silversmith's work, in which realism predominates. It is the same with the Dutch after the Reformation, which was their renaissance. Their ideal and religious painting is contemptible, but their portraits are superb. The works of Rembrandt and Hals are here to answer for it. The ideal was dead, and therefore to paint it was false, while men were all realists.

This was one lesson, then, which Ruskin continually preached in regard to art. It needs preaching still. Have we not among us more than one brilliant artist who thinks he does justice to his gifts, and the dignity of his craft, by reproducing for us the ways of Gods and of men of low animal type who led degrading lives, and are buried out of memory ? From their rotten bones there is no virtue to be squeezed.

Let us now turn to another lesson which Ruskin was the first to preach unflinchingly and without ceasing—"Pre-Raphaelitism." In my opinion Pre-Raphaelitism had nothing whatever to do with what is popularly thought an essential of it. It had nothing whatever to do with choosing for models crooked-faced women with hollow bony cheeks, and cayenne-pepper hair, women whose fingers and toes are all curled up and twisted, who sit or stand like mediæval Saints in lackadaisical or angular attitudes, apparently doing nothing and thinking of nothing but the horrible bore of living in such a world as we enjoy. They never look happy, these sirens ; they seem to

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be in pain: and they give one a dismal foreboding of what a paradise of such people might be like. We are told by some painters that this is very high art. To my mind it is not art at all. It teaches us nothing, certainly no poetry, and gives us no pleasure except sometimes from a fine glow of colours, which is almost reserved for the surroundings and the costumes; while the faces, instead of recalling the mixture of pearls and roses with which Nature paints the cheeks of a beautiful English girl, recall rather the opaque, the puff and powder which produce a complexion that never fades except on washing-days. The Pre-Raphaelitism for which Ruskin was responsible was a very different thing to this. Let me tell you a story:—

I was once privileged to have a long conversation with the most distinguished of the true Pre-Raphaelites, Mr. Holman Hunt, and I asked him what was the origin of the movement. He replied that its origin was a very simple one. "I can remember on one occasion," he said, "that Millais and I were examining the Cartoons of Raphael, when Millais broke out into a tirade against what he deemed the bad drawing and the careless designing in both figures and accessories. 'If this be right,' he said, 'then everything I have taught myself is wrong and vicious. The composition may be graceful and dramatic and the drawing of particular points of the figures, like the hands and the head, may be quite correct; while a general gravity and seriousness pervades the whole: but when you come to details they are slurred over, you cannot recognize what flowers are intended by the flowers, what trees by the trees, what fish by the fish, etc., etc. They are generalized; the men and women and the children too, are generalized, imaginary people drawn in the studio from studies or from actual imagination.'" This Millais declared could not be right. It is not serious art, it is pinchbeck, to paint any generalized object from a mental picture, and not from Nature. Hunt concurred; and the two very young men, both of them poor and unknown, determined to revolt. They began a revolt, and as usual they were bitterly

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opposed by the champions of the old ways. Their pictures were ridiculed and abused and condemned by the high priests of the art of painting, and the two young men passed on from one stage of starvation to another, for no one would buy their pictures. Who would dare to buy pictures which the grand pontiffs of painting had declared to be mere grotesque abortions, and not paintings at all?

When things were as bad as they could be, Ruskin saw and approved of what the young men were doing. He declared that they were right and the rest of the world was wrong; and with his usual determination and courage he began a campaign in favour of truthfulness in detail and accuracy in drawing, and against the slipshod style which had become the practice of the High Style of painting, wherein details were despised and only great and broad effects considered to be of any value.

Of course there were crudities and exaggerations produced, and men tried to create effects with colour on a flat surface for which it was quite unsuited. These were but flies, however, in the pot of ointment. The result was to make the painter feel that in order to learn his craft he must know how to draw and colour accurately, not merely the great figures in a picture, but the small ones; and honest, faithful work was exacted.

It was not only the painter upon whom the lesson was impressed. With perfect consistency and very unusual courage Ruskin, in addressing, as he often did, the humbler and poorer classes, never failed to denounce the theories which the workman has developed under the teaching of his Trades Union masters, that it is his function to do as little work as possible, and to do it carelessly and in a slipshod way. No one has prescribed more eloquently the duty of doing what we have to do as well as it can be done; that all kinds of scamping and slipshod work are crimes against our profession and our order; that the old workmen carved the unseen flowers as deftly as the seen, and their continual strain was after perfection in their craft. To him the Trades Union theory

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that the chief function of a plumber, for instance, is to find work for another plumber, was rank heresy. Let us however continue.

The revolt led by Ruskin against the men who tried to win prizes without long apprenticeship to accurate work, combined with the yearning for reality, speedily destroyed the reputation of great schools of painting which had hitherto been in favour. The Caracci, Guido, and the late Bolognese and Roman School generally, which were the highest aim of the connoisseurs of the last century, fell into disgrace and became quite unfashionable. The same was the case with much of the false realism of certain Dutch artists, the Mieris and Metzu, etc., etc., while those who had gone to Nature directly, and painted not merely Chinapot figures but real ones with real surroundings—Jan Steen and Cuyp, and Hobbema and De Hooghe, and Van der Meire of Delft—received their due.

Especially noticeable was the revolution in standards by which landscape painting was judged. Claude passed under a cloud with his beautiful but exceedingly mechanical landscapes, while Turner came to the front and entirely eclipsed him in popular estimate; and the great strength of the English landscape-painters, who were always face to face with Nature, from Constable and Gainsborough downwards, took the place of the black old masters who painted their landscapes in their garrets and had five or six easels going at the same time.

The judgment passed by Ruskin upon painting he passed also upon sculpture and the plastic art. The inane unreal creations of Bernini and his school, with impossible draperies and attitudes, and with continual efforts to produce effects in marble or bronze only really attainable in other materials and mediums, were swept away; as was also the taste for what is known as baroco in ornament, in porcelain, furniture, etc., etc. Ruskin repudiated all these false standards, and bade us here also go back to Nature, and remember that all ornament ought to have a meaning—that a chair was meant to sit upon and a table to carry books and tea

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cup, and not merely to occupy a certain place in a drawing room. He accordingly bade men go back to the simplicity and directness of the fifteenth century sculpture, and abandon that style which had come in with shams of every kind, from deep-bottomed wigs to powder and puff.

He made, as you all know, a similar stand in architecture. The notion that you may design any exterior to a building that enters your head, he pronounced to be utterly false. The exterior of a building ought to tell you what the interior is like. Those false fronts to Italian churches, which, when you go behind them, you find do not correspond at all to the outlines of the real building; those efforts to hide away staircases, roofs and other constructive features absolutely necessary to the building behind masques and mere sham walls; he declared to be false art. The oblivion into which the art of construction itself had fallen, so that the weakest and most fragile stories in building were put below those which were stronger and more solid; the wrong use of buttresses and pillars which had entirely destroyed the beauty and symmetry of many towers, in which the architects had forgotten that a tower ought really to be able to stand on its feet without buttresses; all these he declared to be contrary to the righteous art-canon of the great builders. This apotheosis of utility, of the real purpose as well as of the truthfulness of presentation of design and ornament, was a lesson our master was continually pressing. He denounced chairs which were neither soft nor comfortable to sit on, he attacked meaningless ornament—as much an abortion as warts on a man's face—and bade us all go back to the old architects, whose ornament grew spontaneously from the character of a building, as the leaves and fruit of a tree do from its branches. He denounced the pretence and sham of mere imitations of plaster painted and smoothed down to imitate marble, of deal painted to imitate walnut, etc., in fact of all things which are not real, but false excrescences. In all this assuredly he was holding aloft the highest standard and ideal we can attain, and putting before us not merely a criticism of in-

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dividual works of art but a criticism by which *all* works of art may be tested. But he went much further than this. Art, he contended, and beauty and truth are not the special heritage of Macænas and the rich connoisseur. It is and it ought to be a continuing religion, in the cottage no less than the palace, taking men's thoughts away from the animal that lies buried deep down in all of us, rescuing us from the dirt and decay and ugliness which fill the baser thoughts of men, when they herd together like swine and eat like gluttons and drink like drunkards, and glorify the passions and coarse tastes that are so often their tyrants. He did not do this in a mere fantastic way, but practically and directly. The ugly towns in which so many of us have lived had, he declared, made men more material. He wanted the children to see, at times at least, flowers and fields, and to breathe smokeless air. The long rows of brick houses all alike and all alike ugly, the smoke-stained walls, the grime upon the women and the little ones, the terrible life people must live where their neighbours are drunken and swinish and foul, in look, in life and in language—he was perpetually preaching and spending his means in antidotes to these sodom-apples of civilization, and trying to make the poor and the helpless see visions of better things; the greenery of the fields, the stately trees, the flights of clouds like seraphs' wings, the beautiful thoughts which poets and painters have written down. Upon this crusade, which he made an active one, he lavished his fortune until he spent it all, and planted samples of what he himself deemed highest and best where the smoke was blackest and the stifling air most thick. He preached continually the necessity for mitigating when we cannot undo the evils that attend civilization. There is no compelling reason at all events why women should be dirty and drunken because they have to live so close together, and become in this way agents for spreading the cancer of the sordid life of our big towns. He preached against the unnecessary destruction of things of beauty, either natural or artistic, as of those consecrated by age and association. And he was not merely an idealist preacher



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and poet, but a practical reformer, showing the way to better things by his example and by his experiments, which were all dictated by the high motive of making the rich and proud more gentle and more simple, and the poor and material more spiritual and more ideal, and thus bridging over the gap which modern life has made between corduroy and black cloth. And when he was wrong in his arguments it is hard to find fault with his inspiration.

Of the political suggestions contained in his economic writings, says one of his distinguished pupils, some have by this time been carried out, and all are now within the range of practical discussion. His principle points were a system of National Education, the Organization of Labour, the establishment of Government Training Schools, Old Age Pensions for soldiers of the ploughshare as well as of the sword, and the provision of decent homes for the working-classes. It requires some effort to realize that this was the programme which forty years ago was "howled out of the Magazines," which Thackeray and Froude both refused to continue printing, so offensive was it to the Philistinism of the day—in the *Cornhill* and *Fraser*. In some forms of philanthropy he was a pioneer. He established a model tea-shop, he organized for the relief of the unemployed gangs of street-sweepers. He was the first to give Miss Octavia Hill the means of managing house-property on the principle of helping the tenants to help themselves. He thought no trouble too great to encourage a pupil or to help the fallen. He was not afraid of the word Utopia. Utopias are probably all doomed to failure, but it would indeed be a bad thing for the world if all men ceased to think them possible. His Utopia was the Guild of St. George, of which the ruling thought was that happiness meant honest work, and that the real delights of life are neither costly, nor the exclusive possession of the rich. St. George's farms were founded to realize Arcadia once more, but they did not succeed. It requires a Guild of Ruskins to carry out Ruskin's ideals thoroughly. He was more successful in his en-



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couragement of co-operative movements, under conditions where workmen and their families lived in their own homes, instead of being merely parts of the machinery of great mills. He planted at Sheffield what he deemed a model Museum, containing the most beautiful specimens he could find to illustrate the lessons told on the labels; drawings, and other artistic objects, precious stones, etc., etc. While these were the manifold personal acts of a man often described as a dreamer, his inspiration has caused a great harvest of good works in others. Among them may be remembered specially those associated with the name of his devoted pupil Toynbee.

Meanwhile his hands were full everywhere of work and helpful suggestion. He is said to have had a genius for friendship; and if anyone wants to test what a man should do for his friend when the latter is ill-used, or his memory tarnished by jealousy or malignity, let him turn to his magnificent championship of Edward Forbes, in which Ruskin's extraordinary aptitude for sound inductive thought on scientific matters is as wonderful as the irresistible power and force with which he deals his blow upon his friend's enemies. He had the courage to speak straight out, too, to his friends, and, if need be, to jeopardise their friendship. He detested what is known as Bohemianism; a short pipe and a dirty slouched hat and unwashed hands and a piggery for a dwelling-room, were his abomination; and he did not spare Rossetti, who tried to make an apotheosis of such things. To Ruskin life is a serious drama: to make it as happy as possible is not a bad way of solving its difficulties; but he deemed even animal satisfaction hardly attainable at the cost of order and cleanliness and propriety.

I have still one word to say, namely, in regard to what is called Society.

It is here that Ruskin's majestic attitude is most prominent, as his warnings and counsel are most needed. His life and writings were a continual protest against the moral diseases which honey-

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comb civilization and make good men yearn, as the romantic French philosopher of the last century yearned, for a return to simpler ways and more modest and purer living. The Juggernaut of untrammelled wealth rolls its brazen wheels over everybody and everything, making life vulgar, common, material, and selfish, glorifying extravagance and profusion, and intensifying the contrast between the classes. Especially does it create and foster among us a great class possessed of both wealth and leisure, but having no duties and making none and caring for none; whose occupation is to kill, not use, time, and to banish ennui by adding more and more condiments to their mental and moral food; who make sport and games the business of life, with a tendency to ever more morbid and dangerous amusements, in which gentle women get harder and harder, try to be more and more like men, and men of the worst class, talking the slang and illiterate vulgarities that one expects to hear from ostlers in a stable, smoking and drinking and gambling, not at casinos, but nightly at their own tables, where their own children are taught to sit and to play high and to hear ribald jests bandied about until all modesty and shame is gone. Every year they crowd more and more to London and Brighton and Homburg and Monte Carlo, and as far as possible from the beautiful country homes, where their children could grow up pure and simple and true, and where their duties call them—duties which have become too prosaic and dull—as if anything under Heaven could be more dull than the monotonous round of parties, frequented by the same people, dressed in the same fashion, talking precisely the same brainless talk, that makes up that Paradise of Society, the London Season!

Such example is catching; it permeates downwards, and we see the cancerous growth spreading everywhere. We see the infernal magnetism of big towns with their glaring lights, their panorama of moving life, their noise and distraction, dragging the peasants away from the dull fields: we see a growing proportion of

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working folk gambling their earnings away: we see women drink more, and become more slatternly and less like wives and mothers, under the pressure of overcrowding and penury and filth and hopelessness. This sounds very pessimistic. It was not written for that purpose. It was written to show how Ruskin's life's teaching and loud-voiced call upon us all to work and to plant our standards higher, was needed. It was meant to do homage to the brave old man, who fought a long fight for truth and purity and kindness and self-devotion, and tried to make men believe that if these things could be brought down here in fuller measure, we might realise even here, a good deal more nearly than some have thought, the heaven painted by the Saints as a far off land.

In conclusion, I am going to try your patience by a still more daring test than my hapless rhetoric in prose, namely by quoting some measured lines in which I have ventured to condense my view of Ruskin more directly:

### RUSKIN.

My gentle master have you gone to rest  
Your tired head upon a seraph's breast,  
Where you may tell to Angels' longing ears  
Some thoughts from Earth as beautiful as theirs,  
May paint our landscapes for them with the pen  
With which you outlined Paradise for men.  
The crimson clouds grew brighter as you sped  
To reach that goal to which your days had led.  
You loved them so, those dimples in the sky  
That gathered round the spirit passing by.  
Through gloam and twilight you were wont to peer  
To secrets trusted only to the seer;  
And these you outlined with so deft a hand  
The babbling child could see and understand.  
The frosty rime, the diamond-sprinkled spray;  
The flower and leaf, the scented thyme and bay;  
The jewels hidden in the mountain side  
To make a necklace for the Elf-king's bride;  
The ferns festooning o'er the white cascade;  
The blushing chorals in the ocean glade;

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The spotted leopard creeping through the dark ;  
The coloured flies, the sweetly-throated lark ;  
The tempest rushing through the crashing brake ;  
The sapphire stillness of the mountain lake ;  
The tufted clouds, now gossamer, now snow ;  
The great sun shedding his imperial glow ;  
The echo in the shell, in which we find  
The childish stories we have left behind—  
These when reflected in your mirror dight  
Were seen as shadows of the Eternal light.  
And thus you taught the dusty crowd to trace  
In Earth's best beauty its Creator's face.  
Thus you made ladders for those steeped in sin  
By which to scale the clouds and peep within.  
You let them see at least a glimpse of things  
Unknown to sordid crowds and sensual kings.  
The meanest folk you helped to purple days,  
And set their stagnant hearts with faith ablaze.  
Faith in the beautiful and pure and good  
Of which they'd heard, but never understood.  
In all you taught one lesson seemed to lurk,  
That men are better than their finest work.  
Their rough hands cannot shape the visions seen  
When in their dreams they near the best have been.  
The poet and the artist had grown blind,  
The arts were all in masquerade enshrined ;  
You led them back to Nature's truthful ways,  
To real things and men and simpler days.  
To times when life was fresh and young and green,  
And saints were oftener by the vulgar seen.  
With barren counsels you were not content,  
You lived your sermons, and yourself you spent.  
Your pure white hands were free from sordid stain,  
The foul and feted met with your disdain ;  
You had no heart for fashion's hollow face,  
A day's short triumph, and a life's disgrace.  
A wreath of olive and a simple grave,  
The love and homage of the good and brave ;  
These, my dear master, you have won galore,  
Who taught us all to sing Excelsior.

## NOTES ON THE MYSTERY OF LIFE AND ITS ARTS.

Forming Lecture III in *Sesame and Lilies*.

By the Reverend J. B. Booth, M.A.

**T**HE lecture tries to show the connection between the the Fine Arts (Poetry, Painting, Music, Architecture, etc.) and the deepest side of Life, the mysteries that envelop Life; and the failure of Art that ignores or trifles with this deepest side.

96. THE POLICY WHICH HAS CONTRIBUTED TO ITS POWER: words intended of any effect exercised on art by law, public custom, or settled opinion. They may refer to what is said (sec. 101) about the uselessness of trying to alter public taste, and (sec. 104) about his vain effort to impose a more beautiful architecture on an incurably mechanical and commercial country.

97. MANY PEOPLE THOUGHT OF THE WORDS ONLY, AND CARED NOTHING FOR THE MEANING: see *Sesame*, sections 20—25. No writer is great except in so far as he sees and expresses truths which other men either do not clearly see or cannot clearly express. Ruskin himself would never have allowed that he could be a great writer, if his guidance were not to be followed. Yet the present, and many another, passage shows that he had been forced to recognize the distinction between the literary artist (such as himself in his earlier work) and the teacher.

"WHAT IS YOUR LIFE? IT IS EVEN AS A VAPOUR." &c. S. James, iv, 14.

98. MAN WALKETH IN A VAIN SHADOW, &c. Psalm xxxix, 7.

99. THE MIST OF EDEN. See Genesis ii, 6. "There went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.

WELLS WITHOUT WATER; CLOUDS THAT ARE CARRIED, &c. II S. Peter, ii, 17.

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100. TITIAN\*: 1477-1576, the greatest and most honoured of Venetian painters, whose education closed only with his long life of ninety-nine years. He acknowledged great benefit from his visit to Rome, where he met Michelangelo—a visit not paid till he was seventy. Painting almost to his last hour, he remarked shortly before his death that he was “only beginning to understand what painting was.” No one of his excellences—not even his exquisite colouring—is permitted to dominate the rest. “Titian’s power,” says Ruskin (*The Two Paths*, secs. 57—8, 69) “is simply the power of doing right. Whatever came before Titian he did wholly as it *ought* to be done.” He “hardly ever paints sunshine, but a certain opalescent twilight which has as much of human emotion as imitative truth in it:

‘The clouds that gather round the setting sun  
Do take a sober colouring from an eye  
That hath kept watch o’er man’s mortality.’”

Among the examples of him in the National Gallery, the “Bacchus and Ariadne” is one of his greatest works.

101. THE GREATEST PAINTER, &c.: Turner (1775—1857) in defence of whom Ruskin wrote his first book *Modern Painters*, a book which has revolutionised art-criticism and indeed art also.

REYNOLDS—Sir Joshua (1723—92). Born at Plympton Earl in Devonshire. Studied in London and in Italy. Became the first President of the Royal Academy on its foundation in 1768. His well-known *Discourses on Art* were delivered to the Academy students at the annual prize-giving. He achieved and deserved remarkable success as a portrait painter. He was of a singularly calm and amiable disposition with all the humility of true greatness. The works of the “old masters” which he studied in Italy impressed him deeply. It is necessary he says to come before them “as a little child.” Of Titian he said “To possess a

\* For further particulars of the painters alluded to in this lecture, the reader is referred to Mr. E. T. Cook’s *Handbook to the National Gallery*.

## NOTES ON "SESAME AND LILIES."

real fine picture by that great master I would willingly ruin myself." While plying his art, he says, he is "the happiest creature alive."

"I am inclined to think" says Ruskin (*Two Paths*, sec. 63) considering all the disadvantages of circumstance and education under which his genius was developed that there was perhaps hardly ever born a man with a more intense and innate gift of insight into human nature than our own Sir Joshua Reynolds. Considered as a painter of individuality in the human form and mind I think him, even as it is, the prince of portrait painters." Sir Joshua's range was however limited. "He painted English gentlemen and English ladies, and English children to perfection; but he seldom painted anything else" (*Fors Clavigera*, 1874, p. 197). Moreover compared with the great paintings of the old masters Sir Joshua's work "at its best is only magnificent sketching."

Some of his finest works are in the National Gallery, though fast fading and cracking owing to the unsuitable pigments he used.

THE PRICE OF MODERN PICTURES GENERALLY ROSE: In the case of Turner's pictures the rise has been phenomenal and continuous. Small water-colour drawings by him which were once to be bought for ten guineas have been sold at Christie's for as much as a thousand guineas, whilst his large pictures have fetched ten times that sum.

THE TURNER DRAWINGS: "Placed for exhibition now," as Ruskin somewhere says, "in a cellar at the National Gallery," to which all lovers of Turner and students of Ruskin should find their way.

102. TO LABOUR AND PERISH USELESSLY: because beyond the full appreciation of the great majority of the people. But so it is with the highest beauty wherever found. This is indeed "a frightful discovery" and one of the great mysteries of life.

WITH THIS STRANGE EXCELLENCE, FAULTS . . . AS DEADLY, &c.: Ruskin means here, the despair which seized upon Turner



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in his later years and through which he then looked at nature, delighting sometimes with a kind of savage delight in ruin and decay. This is partly due to his early life, destitute of either affection or right teaching. In the fifth volume of *Modern Painters* we are told also of Turner's endurance of dirt and ugliness if associated with the scenes of his childhood. Another limitation is touched on in Vol. V, p. 83: "Into the spirit of the pine he cannot enter."

THAT THE GLORY OF IT WAS PERISHABLE: Turner's pictures are especially perishable, as some of the pigments he used are quickly affected by the light: several in the National Gallery are hopelessly faded already.

AS SNOW IN SUMMER AND AS RAIN IN HARVEST. Prov. xxvi, 1.

BENJAMIN WOODWARD: The pupil of Sir Thomas Deane (see next note), whose partner he became and assistant in the building of the additions to Trinity College, Dublin, and of the Oxford Museum. He died in 1861.

SIR THOMAS DEANE (1792-1871), a builder's son at Cork, who, boy as he was at the time of his father's death, contrived with his mother's aid to maintain, and largely to extend, the business. He was contractor for several important public buildings; and in 1830 became Mayor of his native city and was knighted. About this time he adopted the profession of architect, still finding in Cork a field for this new energy. The beautiful addition to Trinity College, Dublin, built by him with the assistance of Benjamin Woodward, his partner and former pupil, is in the Venetian style, and has great merit. The carving of natural foliage in its stone work was all done by Irish workmen trained by the architects themselves. The Museum at Oxford was also built by the same architects. Sir Thomas Deane was noted for his generosity and readiness to assist struggling ability, as for example in the case of Maclise.

THE BUILDING OF THE MUSEUM AT OXFORD: Mainly through the influence of Ruskin, the Oxford Museum was built in the

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Gothic style of architecture. See a somewhat rare pamphlet by Ruskin and Sir Henry Acland (his great friend) called *The Oxford Museum*.

THE ARCHITECTURE WE ENDEAVOURED TO INTRODUCE: *i.e.*, Gothic, which Ruskin declares to be more suitable than any other style for domestic as well as other buildings. In a fine passage of *Modern Painters* he shows that when the great Gothic cathedrals were built the humble cottages round about them were built in the same style of architecture. There is nothing NECESSARILY ecclesiastical in Gothic architecture. Compare the *Edinburgh Lectures on Architecture*, 1853.

STREETS OF IRON: Ruskin detests our modern use of iron-railings. See the beginning of the introduction to *The Crown of Wild Olive*.

PALACES OF CRYSTAL: he compared the Crystal Palace, which disfigures the haunts of his boyhood, to an enormous "cucumber frame."

A building of the same kind had been erected in Dublin for the International Exhibition of 1864, only four years before he delivered his third lecture in that city.

105. POPE (1688-1744). The lines quoted are from *The Essay on Man*, ii, 283-290.

107. OUR HEART FAT . . . HEALED. Isaiah vi, 10. S. Matthew xiii, 14, 15. Acts xxviii, 27.

109. THE KINGS OF THE EARTH ARE AS GRASSHOPPERS, &c. Isaiah xl, 22 and 15.

WHAT HONOUR CAN THERE BE IN THE ARTS, &c.: Times of unbelief and of hopelessness, are times when art and literature are at their lowest ebb, thus exemplifying the closing sentences of section 105.

110. THOUGHT . . . FOR THE MORROW. S. Matthew vi, 34.

I AM NOT . . . SPEAKING OF PERSONS SET APART, &c. Notably S. John in the book of the Revelation: but the sentence

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is intended to guard himself against the appearance of ignoring the function of the clergy as the recognized interpreters of the "deep things" he speaks of.

111. HESIOD'S ACCOUNT: Among the earliest of Greek poets, who lived about a century after Homer, roughly in the period 850-730 B.C. His two great works are the *Theogony*, dealing with the Creation of the World and the birth of the gods, and *Works and Days*, a collection of ethical and agricultural maxims, valuable as affording some picture of peasant-life in Hesiod's day, the reverse of that more brilliant one of kings and heroes drawn for us by Homer.

EVERY ARTIFICE OF INVENTION: Ruskin is thinking of Milton's employment in the *Paradise Lost* of the epic form and plan; of his splendid imaginative pictures of Pandemonium and Satan's hall in Hell, of the progress of Creation, and of the luxuriant beauty of Eden; further of the historical and mythological allusions by which he continually strove to eke out his matter and vary the interest; and, generally, of his effort to portray spiritual things by physical symbols, e.g., the hardened bridge from Hell to Earth, established by Sin and Death soon after the Fall.

FLORENTINE MAIDEN: Beatrice.

112. SHOULD DARE TO PLAY WITH THE MOST PRECIOUS TRUTHS: This is wholly irreconcilable with section 20—"Great men" (speaking of Milton) "do not play stage tricks with the doctrines of life and death."

POMPOUS NOMENCLATURE ADORN THE COUNCILS OF HELL: see *Paradise Lost*, Books ii and x.

TOUCH A TROUBADOUR'S GUITAR TO COURSES OF THE SUNS: i.e., mingle an account of the cosmic system with the tale of his own love, as Dante did by introducing Beatrice into the *Divina Commedia*. Troubadours (from Fr. *troubar*, *trouver*, to find, invent, compose) were the lyrical love-poets who flourished in Southern France, Italy and Spain from the 11th to the 15th century: they are opposed to the Trouvères, or writers of romances in Northern

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France, e.g., *The Romance of the Rose*, begun by Guillaume di Lorris towards the end of the 13th century, and continued by Jean de Meung in the first half of the 14th, and later translated by Chaucer. Troubadours, or Trouvères, wandered from castle to castle singing their verses, and generally attended by Jongleurs, who accompanied them on the guitar. If sometimes licentious, these early poets at least represented the gentler and softer side of life in an era of war and violence.

BEFORE WHICH PROPHETS HAVE VEILED THEIR FACES. Exodus iii, 6. See also Isaiah vi.

WHICH ANGELS DESIRE TO LOOK INTO. I S. Peter i, 12.

IDLE PUPPETS OF THE SCHOLASTIC IMAGINATION: alluding to Dante's continual reference to and adoption of opinion from the "schoolmen," or speculative philosophers and theologians of his time. Their over-curious and subtle enquiries have made the term "scholastic" a proverb for pedantry and pride of useless lore to the modern world, which in its own pride of exact and useful science forgets the vast industry, the monumental patience, with which the schoolmen mastered the whole field of knowledge current in their day, under difficulties far greater than our own.

Among the greatest of them were Albertus Magnus (the Universal Doctor), St. Thomas Aquinas ("The Angelic Doctor"), Bonaventura ("The Seraphic Doctor"), Duns Scotus ("The Subtle Doctor"), and Roger Bacon ("The Marvellous Doctor.")

MELANCHOLY LIGHTS . . . LOST MORTAL LOVE: Dante's feeling for Beatrice.

113. THEY WERE MEN OF INTELLECTUAL WAR. Dante was banished and his property confiscated in 1302, when the Guelphs were in the ascendant over the Ghibellines and the Bianchi, whose cause Dante espoused. Moreover Beatrice, whom he loved, had been married to another, and had shortly afterwards died.

Milton bore a conspicuous part in the great Civil War, writing and acting on the side of the Parliament. In 1649 he was

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appointed foreign secretary to the Council of State. By 1652 he had become totally blind. His wife died about the same time, and a second wife whom he shortly afterwards married died within a year. Milton engaged also in religious as well as in political controversy.

HOMER: The earliest of the great Greek poets. Little is known about his early life, and that little and even his very existence is disputed. Various places in Greece contended for the honour of being his birthplace. He is supposed (like our own Milton) to have been blind for at any rate part of his life, and to have died about 850 B.C. The chief works attributed to him (though it is doubtful whether they are wholly by his hand) are the *Iliad* (*i.e.* the Song of Ilium or Troy) and the *Odyssey* (*i.e.* the account of the Wanderings of Odysseus or Ulysses on his return from the siege of Troy). Both have been translated into verse by George Chapman (1557-1634), and by Pope; into prose in our own day by Butcher and Lang.

ACHILLES . . . GODDESS-BORN AND GODDESS-TAUGHT: the chief hero of the *Iliad*, born of the Nereid Thetis, advised and instructed by the wise goddess Athene. He is called above "the most unjust of men" on account of the selfish personal motives which dictate his action, and bring such calamity on the Greek cause; especially his long abstention from battle because Agamemnon, the Greek leader, had deprived him of the maiden Briseis, who had been allotted as his portion of the spoil. He is "the most cruel of men" because when he has killed Hector, who has slain his bosom-friend Patroclus, he ties the body behind his chariot and drags it three times round the walls of Troy.

BASEST OF HIS ADVERSARIES: Paris, who is said to have slain Achilles at Troy, wounding him by an arrow in his only vulnerable part—the heel. His mother, Thetis, had tried to make him invulnerable by dipping him in the river Styx, and had succeeded with the exception of his ankles by which she held him. Paris (son of Priam, King of Troy) was the cause of the Trojan War, having

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carried off Helen, the wife of Menelaus, who was King of Lacedæmon (Sparta) and brother of Agammonon.

115. OUR OWN POET, &c.: Shakespeare.

BY PETTY CHANCE, *e.g.*, the changing of the foils in *Hamlet*. Again in *Much Ado about Nothing*, the gossip of Dogberry and Verges prevents the exposure of Don John's villainy.

BY MOMENTARY FOLLY: *e.g.*, Cordelia in *Lear*, i, 1.

BY BROKEN MESSAGE: *e.g.*, in *Romeo and Juliet*, iv, 2. See also the failure of Edmund's messenger to save Cordelia's life. *King Lear*, v, sc. 3.

BY FOOL'S TYRANNY: *e.g.*, Hermione by Leontes (*Winter's Tale*).

TRAITOR'S SNARE: *e.g.* Othello by Iago.

THE DEATH-BED OF KATHARINE: *Henry VIII*, Act iv, sc. 2.

THE GREAT SOLDIER-KING STANDING BY HIS FEW DEAD, &c.: *Henry V*, Act iv, sc. 8

SAVE . . . BY MANY OR BY FEW: I Samuel xiv, 6.

"THE GODS ARE JUST," &c.: *King Lear*, Act v, sc. 3. The readings vary. Quarto 1 (1608) and the other quartos have "scourge." Folio 1 (1632) whose text is generally better, has "plague."

OUR INDISCRETION . . . PLOTS DO PALL:

"Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,  
When our deep plots shall pall: and that should teach us  
There's a divinity that shapes our ends  
Rough-hew them how we will." *Hamlet*, v, 2, 7-10.

116. WHO WEIGH THE EARTH AND THE DUST OF IT IN A BALANCE: See Isaiah xl, 12.

AND WHAT IS THE MYSTERY OF LIFE TO US, IS NONE TO THEM: This also is a mystery of life and a sad one.

118. "PRACTICAL" (and see "practically" in section 117). The kind of worship that is accorded to men reputed "practical" is frequently nothing more than the worship of vulgarity, short-

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sightedness, stupidity and selfishness. Dr. Johnson used to say that patriotism was the "last refuge of a scoundrel." To be "practical" is often the first and last refuge of the hard-hearted and the selfish. Ruskin is full of fine scorn for all these practical people and their practical methods. See *e.g.*, *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 3 (at the end).

THE CHILD IS THE FATHER OF THE MAN: From one of Wordsworth's "Poems referring to the period of Childhood." It is as follows:

"My heart leaps up when I behold  
A rainbow in the sky:  
So was it when my life began;  
So is it now I am a man;  
So be it when I shall grow old,  
Or let me die!  
'The child is father of the man;  
And I could wish my days to be  
Bound each to each by natural piety."

119. EDEN . . . DRESS AND KEEP: See Genesis ii, 15.

HEWERS OF WOOD AND DRAWERS OF WATER: Joshua ix, 21.

120. REYNOLDS. See on section 101. The principal writings of Sir Joshua are his *Discourses on Art*, already referred to, *Notes on the Art of the Low Countries*, annotations to Du Fresnoy's *Art of Painting*, and contributions to Dr. Johnson's *Idler*.

122. GUSTAVE DORE (1833-1883). Born of German parents at Strassburg—studied at Paris. Became famous as a book-illustrator and a painter. He illustrated the works of Rabelais, Balzac's *Contes Drolatiques*, Dante, *The Legend of the Wandering Jew*, *Don Quixote*, Milton, and also The Bible. His best picture is "Paolo and Francesca," exhibited at the Paris Salon in 1863. He was possessed of a fertile though often unpleasant imagination, and great facility of workmanship. His drawing and composition are both indifferent, notably so in his enormous painting "Christ leaving the Prætorium."

THE FURIES: called also "Erinyes," and "Eumenides" ("well-  
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meaning"), the latter because people were afraid to call them by their real name. They were the three goddesses of vengeance, and are represented as the daughters of Earth and Night—winged and with serpents in their hair and blood dripping from their eyes. They punished wrong-doers both here and after death, and they were feared even by the gods.

THE HARPIES: *i.e.*, Robbers or Spoilers—Disgusting monsters in the form of birds with female heads, long claws and hungry faces, sent to torment the blind soothsayer Phineus because he had deprived his own sons of sight in consequence of a false accusation made against them by their stepmother. Whenever he sat down to a meal the Harpies swooped down, and either carried it off or befouled it.

MADONNAS OF RAPHAEL—the representations of the Virgin ("My Lady," "Our Lady"). Raphael (1483–1520), son of a painter and poet, had a marvellous power in studying the works of other painters of making their excellences his own. In 1508 Pope Julius II invited him to Rome, where he spent many years of his short life (he died at the age of thirty-seven) in painting altar pieces, frescoes, and his famous cartoons. For a severe criticism of these last see *Modern Painters*. We are told of Raphael that his disposition was so sweet and gracious that "not only was he honoured by men, but even by the very animals, who would constantly follow his steps and always loved him." When he died Rome flocked to where he lay in state to gaze for the last time on "the divine painter."

Ruskin says (*Lectures on Architecture and Painting*) that from the time of Raphael "the intellect and the art of Italy date their degradation. . . . And it was brought about by the very excellences of the man who had thus marked the commencement of decline. The perfection of execution and the beauty of feature which were attained in his works and in those of his greatest contemporaries, rendered finish of execution and beauty of form the chief objects of all artists; and thenceforward execution was looked

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for rather than thought, and beauty rather than veracity. . . . The mediæval principles led *up* to Raphael, and the modern principles lead *down* from him." It was this "leading down" to modern conventionalities against which the "Pre-Raphaelites" revolted. See note, sec. 60.

One of Raphael's greatest pictures is the "Ansidei Madonna" in the National Gallery.

SIBYLS: prophetic women, associated chiefly with the legendary early history of the Romans. The most famous was the Sybil of Cumæ, whom Virgil describes in *Æneid*, vi, where he represents Æneas as consulting her before his descent to the lower world. That alluded to here is Michel Angelo's fresco of the Delphic Sibyl (or a priestess of the oracle of Apollo at Delphi) in the Sistine Chapel at Rome, criticised by Ruskin in *Ariadne Florentina*, ch. iv.

MICHAEL ANGELO (1475-1564): Renowned both as a sculptor, painter, architect, and poet. His personal character was like his work—great. As an artist he was the rival of Raphael, who thanked God that he was born in the days of Michael Angelo." Sir Joshua Reynolds in his *Discourses*, already referred to, says of him that "to catch the slightest of his perfections would be glory and distinction enough for an ambitious man." The finest example of his pictures in the National Gallery is "The Holy Family."

ANGELICO (1387-1455): Probably the-greatest painter of what is called the Purist school, *i.e.*, of those who paint whatever of good they can find and leave the evil. Angelico spent his life in trying to realise and depict the inhabitants of heaven, and the expression of holiness given by his pictures is their highest characteristic. He entered the convent of the Dominicans in Florence, and was given the name of Angelico there because of his purity and heavenly mind. "He was never known to be angry, or to reprove save in gentleness and love. Nor did he ever take pencil in hand without prayer, and he could not paint the Passion of

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Christ without tears of sorrow." By this "purity of life, habitual elevation of thought, and natural sweetness of disposition, he was enabled," says Ruskin, "to express the sacred affections upon the human countenance as no one ever did before or since." And again, "The art of Angelico both as a colourist and a draughtsman is consummate: so perfect and beautiful that his work may be recognised at any distance by the rainbow play and brilliancy of it. However closely it may be surrounded by other works of the same school, glowing with enamel and gold, Angelico's may be told from them at a glance, like so many pieces of opal lying among common marbles" (*Stones of Venice*, vol. I, app. 15).

Read also *The Ethics of Dust*, pp. 150-152.

There are two good examples of Fra Angelico in the National Gallery, viz.: "The Resurrection" and "The Adoration of the Magi."

CORREGGIO (1494-1534): Antonio Allegri, called Correggio from his native village, where and in Parma he lived a quiet unostentatious life devoted to his art. No painter has a style so peculiarly his own as Correggio—"the Correggiosity of Correggio." To him when he paints, the world is a place full of "sensuous joy" and happy life. The "sidelong grace" and sweetness of his style he obtains chiefly by his marvellous gradation of lovely colour. He is "the captain of the painter's art as such. Other men have nobler and more numerous gifts, but as a *painter*, master of the art of laying colour so as to be lovely, Correggio is alone." (Ruskin's *Oxford Lecture on Art*, sec. 177.)

One of his finest pictures—"Mercury, Venus, and Cupid"—is in the National Gallery. "The two pictures which I would last part with out of it," says Ruskin, "would be Titian's 'Bacchus' and Correggio's 'Venus.'"

123. LONG AGO: *The Two Paths* was published in 1854, fourteen years before the delivery of the lecture we are considering. Rough drawings of the two angels accompany the text in *The Two Paths*.

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128. THE LAW OF HEAVEN . . . THAT IN THE SWEAT, &c. : Genesis iii, 19.

"WHATSOEVER THY HAND," &c. : Ecclesiastes ix, 10.

129. SIX THOUSAND YEARS: Ruskin is adopting the old and now discredited reckoning according to which the world was created about B.C. 4000. But six thousand years is about the period for which we as yet possess any definite reliable records.

TO TILL THE GROUND FROM WHICH WE WERE TAKEN: Genesis iii, 23.

THE FOREST CANTONS: the four Swiss provinces, Lucerne, Schwyz, Uri and Unterwalden, surrounding the Lake of Lucerne, called locally the "Vierwaldstättersee" (lake of the four forest cantons).

VAUDOIS VALLEYS: The Vaudois or Waldenses were an early Protestant sect who withstood the corruptions of the Church of Rome. They suffered great persecutions in France, and about 1375 settled in the valleys of the Cottian Alps—chiefly in Piedmont—to escape their persecutors. But in the seventeenth century the persecution against them was so terrible that Charles I interceded for them and Oliver Cromwell demanded and obtained for them a certain amount of toleration, after threatening that the sound of his cannon should be heard in Rome if his request were denied. See Milton's sonnet *On the late Massacre in Piedmont*, written about 1655.

FEVERED IDIOTISM: See note on "cretinous," sec. 23, Lecture I.

THE GARDEN OF THE HESPERIDES: The famous garden, generally located on the N.W. African Coast, opposite the Canaries, in which grew the golden apples which Gaea (the Earth) gave to Hera (Juno) on her marriage with Zeus (Jupiter). The apples were guarded by the Hesperides, the daughters of Atlas and Hesperis, assisted by the terrible dragon, Ladon. It was one of the labours imposed upon Hercules to obtain the apples.

IN OUR OWN DOMINION: Orissa in India. (See section 5 in the preface of 1871.)

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130. THEIR VIRGIN GODDESS: Athena (Minerva), credited with the invention of weaving, and needlework of all kinds.

"SHE LAYETH . . . THE MERCHANT:" Proverbs xxxi, 19-22 and 24.

"I WAS NAKED AND YE CLOTHED ME NOT:" S. Matthew xxv, 43.

131. PREVALENTLY: Lat. *præ-valere*, "to be very strong," and so lasting, prevailing, from which the more common sense "wide-spread" is derived.

ASSOCIATED WITH ALL CIVIC PRIDE: *i.e.*, in public buildings.

SACRED PRINCIPLE: *i.e.*, in churches.

WITH WHICH MEN RECORD THEIR POWER: *e.g.*, the Pyramids of Egypt: SATISFY THEIR ENTHUSIASM, as in mausoleums or monuments to the dead.

"I WAS A STRANGER AND YE TOOK ME NOT IN:" S. Matthew xxv, 43.

132. AS THE WILD FIGTREE CASTS HER UNTIMELY FIGS: See Revelation vi, 13.

AS A VAPOUR . . . VANISHETH AWAY: S. James iv, 14

133. SHADOW WHICH DISQUIETS ITSELF IN VAIN: Psalm xxxix, 7, in the Prayer Book version.

SMOKE OF THE TORMENT THAT ASCENDS FOR EVER: Revelation xiv, 11.

A MOMENT, AS THE TWINKLING OF AN EYE: I Cor. xv, 52.

"HE MAKETH THE WINDS HIS MESSENGERS," &c.: Psalm civ, 4, in the Prayer Book version.

134. "HE COMETH WITH THE CLOUDS AND EVERY EYE SHALL SEE HIM:" Revelation i, 7.

"THE JUDGMENT WILL BE SET AND THE BOOKS OPENED:" Daniel vii, 10.

DIES IRAE: "Day of Wrath," the first words of the ancient Latin hymn. Sir Walter Scott's translation "That day of wrath, that dreadful day," in the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, canto vi, 31, is well known. (See Hymns Ancient and Modern, No. 206.)

Goethe also makes striking use of the hymn in *Faust*. The

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oldest form of the *Dies Irae* is in the MS. of a fourteenth century Missal, in the Bodleian Library.

IN THE FLAME OF ITS WEST: its flaming sunset.

"THEY THAT ARE HIS . . . LUSTS." Galatians v, 24.

TO LEAVE HOUSES, LANDS, &c. S. Matthew xix, 29.

STATION IN LIFE: *cf.*, Lecture I, sec. 2,

LEVI'S STATION IN LIFE: S. Mark ii, 14.

PETER'S: S. Matthew iv, 18, 19.

PAUL'S: Acts ix, 1-22.

136. TO FEED THE HUNGRY. Isaiah lviii, 6, 7.

IF ANY MAN WILL NOT WORK, &c.: 2 Thessalonians iii, 10.

140. THE PHARISEE'S THANKSGIVING. S. Luke xviii, 11.

See section 16 in Preface of 1871.

"FOR THE GREATEST OF THESE IS CHARITY:" I Cor. xiii, 13.

## REVIEWS.

*The Epistles of Erasmus, from his Earliest Letters to his Fifty-first Year, arranged in order of time. English Translations, with Commentary, etc. By F. M. Nichols. Longmans, 1901. 18/-.*

**T**HERE is a rare charm about letters. When the letters are those of a notable character in a stormy and critical time of history, they are invested with a rich and varied interest. Mr. Nichols has earned our warmest thanks for the labour and loving care he has spent on the correspondence of Erasmus. He has produced a work which for minuteness and completeness would be worthy of the best traditions of the German commentators. The defect of its strength is perhaps a certain heaviness foreshadowed in the title. We are at a loss to know why letters should be called epistles. The present volume covers the first fifty years of his life: it makes us look forward eagerly to any further instalment which Mr. Nichols may give us. The collection, so far as it goes, is practically complete. The few letters of which translations are not given are described in the commentary. The object of the book is two-fold—(1) to arrange the letters chronologically, (2) to make them accessible to those who cannot read Latin, but are willing to go further than occasional translated extracts or the paraphrases of Froude. The first is a labour of exceptional difficulty, in which Mr. Nichols has done admirably, so far as we are able to judge. This is not the place for any remarks on a question so technical. Even considering the second only, it is hard to know how best to spend our space. The translation is as good as we could wish; while the commentary answers any questions we wish to ask, and does so very modestly, not forcing the editor's private views upon us at every point.

It is not a bad exercise in reading the letters to hark back



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pretty often to one's own correspondence. A very little thought will convince that we are dealing with difficult and elusive material, and we shall before all things beware of drawing hasty inferences. When we find our author giving himself away badly we shall first search for circumstances which will explain the straits to which he was put. Nothing reflects the many-sidedness of character and temperament so vividly and irrevocably as correspondence. The sympathy or repulsion of each correspondent lights up a different set of facets, which reveal themselves in very various tones and colours. Perhaps it is hardly a metaphor to say that each correspondent sets the mind instinctively upon an ancient and unique brain-path where he alone has normally right of way. If we feel this to be at all true in ourselves we shall not be likely to fall into the error of many historians and biographers, who follow out to a triumphant close some theory which, at the very outset, debars them from sympathy with whole tracts of the complex humanity with which they are dealing.

We are taken from the very first into an atmosphere of literature which affects everything in a peculiar way. After reading a little there is no need to be told how the Renaissance exalted scholarship to the first place in life, and with what a zeal some men devoted their lives to Good Letters. To them it was no unmeaning phrase, "the humanities." We watch with the privilege of intimacy the old world captivating the mind of the new—a strange sight for us to whom all the ages of European civilisation are now so open. From the very first schoolboy letter we find everywhere the worship of style, the determination to master the expression of the ancients who flourished so dazzlingly before the dark ages (v. Ep. 22). These young scholars made themselves Poets, Orators, Divines on the old models, they made extravagant claims for the poetic genius of their friends, whom the world, alas! refuses to remember. They little dreamt that their age was to be remembered as one of criticism, utterly barren of creative power; they watch eagerly for rising stars of scholar-

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ship and poetry; they practice hard, and especially in their letters. Imagine the young students at Stein writing elaborate letters from one cell to another; sending often exercises in rhetoric and paradox and invective in epistolary form. The "text-book" which has done so much for good and evil in our educational system was quite unknown: instead, successful letters were shown round and used as models. We must read them primarily to enjoy them as their recipients did—we could never regain the fresh joy of production—but we must watch them carefully where their evidence is concerned. Think of an acute critic in some dry-light futurity interpreting history out of the semi-serious letters of students of to-day! We must expect and enjoy playful exaggeration of many kinds, but apply no more rigid literal interpretation than we should to current slang. We are no longer disturbed by things which are "frightful" or "awful," or even "beastly," any more than it is a serious matter for a Frenchman to be "desolated." There are modern epistolary difficulties with nothing like them possible in a classic tongue. Still Latin is a very good language to exaggerate in. It gives great scope to the rare and delicate pedantry of lips and pen when the thought is living enough to bear it lightly—in some measure the charm of Sir Thomas Browne and Charles Lamb. One of the manifestations of the literary spirit is the delight in manipulating that most seductive of musical instruments, language—in this case with all the added zest of an art which was lost and is found.

A very amiable form of exaggeration in the student-letters is that of personal affection. Instructive, too, because it goes deep. Students have a real community, set in an environment whose elements—indifference and endless variety—are equally puzzling and estranging. He is indeed a luckless student who has never felt "*animae dimidium meae*"! and withal been careless of the number of halves in the whole. "It is indeed an auspicious day, to be distinguished with a snow-white mark, on which I have gained you for a friend, and you have become no small part of my soul"!

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says Erasmus. True this enthusiasm is roused by the gift of a book ; but the slightest analysis shows how dear a bond between friends is the gift of a book appreciated by both. How much more, then, when the gifts of these friends were manuscripts, lovingly and laboriously transcribed often by their own hand. Perhaps it was "some game of no common sort" which "fell unexpectedly into my net when I was hunting last summer in an old library, for no coverts afford more delightful sport." For it was not till the closing years of the fifteenth century that the learned world began to be at all familiar with the Press. Mr. Nichols shows how slowly the art of transcription gave way before the new art. It is not till Erasmus visits Italy that we get into the atmosphere of printing. Then we count the rapid output of the Aldine Press and watch Erasmus busy correcting proof-sheets in the office.

Of all the wealth of detail which offers attractive material, we will only now speak of his humour, which seems to us a more constant habit of Erasmus's mind than is generally recognised. It is a most difficult quality to estimate, but it affects the evidence everywhere, especially that against himself. For instance, the two most objectionable features which he has openly exhibited to his friends are his begging and his denunciations of acquaintance, especially where he has been disillusioned. Now, setting aside the more important considerations to be taken into account—*e.g.*, the circumstances of the time, the difficulties of the scholar's lot ; peculiarities, such as extreme sensitiveness, ill-health, taint of meanness and suspicion, defects in good breeding and high courage, danger of training in rhetoric and of the dramatic gift, and so on—humour has no small part to play in softening the asperities. His begging letters are often comically exaggerated, although the inexcusable residuum is perhaps considerable. As to the invectives, we have only to look at a few mock ones to see how keen in him is the natural pleasure in the form of vituperation. "I damn you whenever your abusive words come into my

mind, whenever I see in imagination those glaring eyes, that mouth shaped for mere scurrility," is an unpromising start for an affectionate piece of banter. Some of the invectives were circulated as exercises in rhetoric, others served the useful purpose of paying off old scores. Perhaps the funniest of the latter kind is that directed against his landlady (Ep. 47), or the old Englishman at the Paris boarding-house (Ep. 55), a delightfully stilted sketch. These remind us very much of the *Colloquies* he was to write later, where for the sake of his story he was not infrequently unkind to people to whom the reference would be guessed. Perhaps to modern eyes he seems dangerously near to emulating the heroic deeds of the anonymous letter writer. Here is comic dismay with a delicious point: "I celebrated the Bishop of Cambrai in three Latin epitaphs and one Greek. They sent me only six florins—to make him like himself even in death!" Here it has a stern touch and "fine point of scorn": "Pope Julius plays the part of Julius to perfection." Generally speaking, it does not lend itself to quotation; it is ingrained in his habit of thought. But very frequently you seem to watch a smile flickering round that mobile mouth, while the crowsfeet deepen at the narrow corners of those humorous eyes. "Therefore, for your own sake, pay some respect to the man, who indeed has a fair claim on you. He has publicly interpreted your poems, and that for nothing. You will thank him, but not give him anything, especially anything that may be of use to me." Or again, after a kindness from an Abbot: "This I scarcely ventured to hope, for I know how destitute my writings are of anything to recommend them to the great." Sometimes his humour has been like to do him serious harm—e.g., when he went to Holland and "tried his health by drinking." Dutch hospitality pre-supposed a Dutch digestion. Or, best of all, his rapturous description of the English habit of kissing, which terribly misled one grave biographer and has shocked several.

We have devoted much space to minor matters. It will not

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be all wasted if any feel tempted to go for themselves to Mr. Nichols' book, and if they hear our plea for the most human treatment of the prince of humanists.

J. A. D.

*Mother Holda Stories. By Edith H. Scott. London: George Allen, 3/6 net.*



VERY fairy-tale worth recording at all," says Ruskin, "is the remnant of a tradition possessing true historic value—historical, at least, in so far as it has naturally arisen out of the mind of a people under special circumstances, and risen not without meaning, nor removed altogether from their sphere of religious faith."

With this ideal of a fairy-tale before her Miss Edith H. Scott has produced a series of charming stories, endowing the familiar objects of cottage and garden with the half believed in mystery so dear to the hearts of children, and blending the natural fairy lore of fragrant meadow and dreamy wood with the gentler influences that breathe through the heroic stories of the past. Bearing in mind the tribute of gratitude we owe to Northern mythology, she has also embodied some of its more beautiful legends with stories which are filled—simply, not intrusively—with the Spirit of the Christian faith.

"The Great Earth Mother it is who is called Mother Holda, and sometimes Bertha the Beautiful Spinner, she who taught women to spin and weave, and who comes at times in her swan's dress among the children of men."

"Mother Holda's home is in the beautiful meadows under the mountains, where she watches over her troops of happy children. Some of these are the babies yet to be born into the world of men; and some are the children who have come back again into Mother Holda's Kingdom."

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The enchanted cottage to which children loved to go stood "just on the edge of the country, where the town had crept up little by little, until even the high walls of the garden could only just keep it out." There was a green wooden door in the high wall, which assisted with all its strength to keep out the town, but opened willingly enough at the gentle tap of little fingers; and once through that door, and within those high walls, the children knew they were in fairy land; and the kind hearted Cha who presided over the tiny cottage and large garden, and could interpret the language of the poppy and the rose, always met them with a warm welcome.

And when the old mulberry tree, who had lived in the garden for unnumbered years, began his evening reflections on the days when he was young, and the sunlight was bidding a lingering "good-night" to the flowers, while the shadows inside the cottage were being called by the fire from the corners where they had lain hidden during the day time, Cha would perhaps say "Shall I tell you a story?"

Then the happy children seated themselves on low wooden stools, much to the delight of the shadows, and soon they would be unable to tell whether the cottage was a fairy dream and Cha the Fairy Queen; or these the beautiful realities of life, and the murky town outside the high wall an unpleasant dream that would never return.

Cha would tell them of the little girl who released the fairies from long imprisonment in the bar of soap, and sent them back in rainbow coloured bubbles to their home amongst the flowers; or of little Elizabeth who found the tired and hungry princess in the wood and took care of her, being afterwards rewarded for her tender heartedness by a day in Mother Holda's garden, where the beautiful princess had been taken by her royal kinsfolk.

Sometimes Cha would take the children into the dream wood, where they could see all the animals famed in story for noble deeds. There they met the good wolf who nourished Romulus and

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Remus; the pretty white doe who always went with its mistress to the old abbey; the lion of St. Jerome, and the lion who saved Androcles; the faithful Bayard and the horse of St. Columba; until they were quite sure that all animals were nice and good, and always kind to people who were kind to them.

Or perhaps Cha would tell them of the Sagaman who had heard a wonderful story about a Son of God who had come to earth as in the olden time, bringing a message of peace and goodwill to all the world. The Sagaman thought it might be Baldur the Beautiful come again to renew the earth, but to his daughter, Ebba, it was revealed that He was not Baldur. Following a starlit pathway she was led to Mother Holda's Garden, where she saw a wooden trough full of hay, and on the hay lay a baby, around whose head was a radiant light which filled the garden with brightness, and made the white wings of the maidens who clustered about him shine like snowy clouds with the sun on them. And as she looked, Mother Holda approached, and said, "The Child is come at last, and is in my care until the day when the wood of my trees shall make Him a throne from which He will govern the world; and then I, the servant of His servants, will go with them to plant the wilderness with my roses, and make the whole earth the garden of God."

By the aid of such stories does Miss Scott endeavour to train aright the imagination and character of the little ones, and we are grateful to her, not only for what she has given us, but for what she has rejected. "Mother Holda Stories" is entirely free from the ugly or vicious creatures which so often mar books written for children, and which, though they may have a strong fascination for them, cannot leave an altogether wholesome impression upon their plastic minds.

The illustrations, which are the work of Miss Alice M. Horton and Mr. Harrison R. Fowler, are characterized by a simple and graceful charm, and the book is in every respect deserving of a hearty welcome from all who take an interest in the right develop-



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ment of children, and are careful that their robust appetite for reading shall be gratified only by books that are pure and beautiful.

*The Monastery of San Marco.* By G. S. Godkin. London, J. M. Dent and Co., 1901

**M**OST English visitors to Florence are sensible of the peculiar fascination which the venerable monastery of San Marco exercises. The part it played in the history of Italy, the memory of the world famous monks which its walls have sheltered, the priceless frescoes which adorn its little cells; these all unite to give it an interest surpassed by few other buildings. Mr. Godkin writes as one who has yielded to the fascination, with the result that his narrative is bright and inspiring, and full of human interest. He gives an account of the foundation of the monastery and deals fairly fully with the lives of the more famous of its monks. The account of the life and times of Savonarola is particularly well done, and we are given a most vivid picture of his great struggle with the ignorance and vice of his age, and of his awful martyrdom.

Our only criticism is directed to the account Mr. Godkin gives of Fra Angelico, which is all too brief and is concerned mainly with the man himself. The references to his immortal frescoes are very slight, no adequate account being attempted.

## NOTES.

ST. GEORGE'S GUILD. A Meeting of the Trustees and Companions of St. George's Guild was held in the Ruskin Museum, Sheffield, on Thursday, 5th December, 1901, Mr. George Thomson, in the Chair.

Letters were read from Companions who were unable to attend. The chairman gave an interesting account of the work done by the trustees, on behalf of the Guild, and the meeting expressed its hearty appreciation of the same.

The following resolution was proposed by Mr. Thomson, seconded by Mr. Leach, of Cambridge, and unanimously adopted.

"That Mr. George Baker, J.P., of Beaucastle, Bewdley, be elected Master of the Guild for one year."

The secretary stated that all the letters and proxies of Companions were in favour of Mr. Baker's election as Master.

Mr. Baker, in accepting the position, spoke in terms of great affection for the late Master and Founder of the Guild, and of the great work he had accomplished. He felt the difficulty of taking the Mastership after so great a man, but it was felt to be necessary, in the interests of the Guild, to have a Master, and he would do all that he could for the prosperity of the Guild, relying upon the co-operation of the Companions. As regards subscriptions, he accepted the suggestions made at the Liverpool Meeting that Companions should subscribe one per cent. of income, £10 to be regarded as sufficient in any case; but he preferred that this matter be left to the freewill of the Companions.

Mr. William Wardle, of Liverpool, was elected honorary secretary for one year, and other important business was transacted.

We are sure our readers will be glad to have this indication that the active work of the Guild is to be revived.

MISS KATE  
GREENAWAY.

The death of Miss Kate Greenaway, the well-known artist and member of the Royal Institute of Painters in Water-Colours, will be widely regretted. Miss Greenaway's training was thoroughly English, as was the characteristic work for which she was so celebrated throughout artistic Europe; Kensington and the Slade School were the nurseries of her genius, apart from the influence of her father, who was connected as a wood-engraver with the well-known Landells, who worked for *Punch*. Miss Greenaway began her career with drawings in *Little Folks*. She afterwards came forward as an illustrator of books, and her remarkable water-colour work came to attract more and more attention, until her name became, in very truth and soberness, a household word. The "Kate Greenaway" style had become, long before the artist's death, a well-known term of art among the dressmaking sisterhood, and her pictures had obtained the widest celebrity both inside and outside her native country as a body of thoroughly individual and at the same time characteristically English work. Children, as everyone knows were her favourite subjects. She realised in a manner that only genius could compass the innocence, freshness, simplicity, and gaiety of childhood; her perfect sympathy with all the moods of the little people was what brought her quickly into the front rank, and won for her the sincere admiration of John Ruskin, among others. Ruskin wrote an introduction to one of her books, which his own publisher issued, and spoke of her in one of his lectures on "The Art of England" as giving to us "the radiance and innocence of reinstated infant divinity showered again among the flowers of English meadows." One of the most ideal combinations of writer and illustrator was seen in the edition of Browning's *Pied Piper of Hamelin* for which she designed the pictures. "Mavor's Spelling Book," "Kate Greenaway's Alphabet," "Little Ann," "Mother Goose," and "The Language of Flowers" are among her best-known works. She had exhibited, but not often, in the Royal Academy; for the last time in 1895.

## SAINT GEORGE.

### OUR COINAGE.

In connection with Carpaccio's conception of St. George, which we illustrate in the present number, it is interesting to recall Mr. Ruskin's criticism of the representation of the same subject which has for so long appeared on our coinage. Writing in *Fors*, Mr. Ruskin says: "If you chance to have such a thing as a real "pound" in your own pocket, besides the hypothetical pounds you have in other people's—put it on the table, and and let us look at it together.

"As a piece of mere die-cutting, that St. George is one of the best bits of work we have on our money. But as a design—how brightly comic it is! The horse looking abstractedly into the air, instead of where precisely it *would* have looked, at the beast between its legs. St. George, with nothing but his helmet on (being the last piece of armour he is likely to want) putting his naked feet, at least his feet showing their toes through the buskins, well forward, that the dragon may with the greatest convenience get a bite at them; and about to deliver a mortal blow at him with a sword which cannot reach him by a couple of yards—or, I think, in George III's piece, with a field-marshal's trunchion."

We commend Mr. Ruskin's criticism to the attention of the Government in view of the new coinage about to be issued.